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ABSTRACT

The Advertising, Part 1 section of the Proceedings contains the following 12 papers: "Incorporating a Promotional Products Teaching Component into the Advertising Campaigns Course: A Partnership Pilot Program" (Denise E. DeLorme); "Information Cues in Renmin Ribao Advertisements (1979-1998)" (Susanna W. Y. Kwok); "Impact of Soft-Money-Sponsored Issue Advocacy Advertising versus Candidate-Sponsored Positive and Negative Advertising: Influences on Candidate Preferences and Democratic Processes" (Michael Pfau, R. Lance Holbert, Erin Alison Szabo, and Kelly Kaminski); "The Emergence of Integrated Marketing Communications: A Theoretical Overview" (John M. McGrath); "Agency Concerns Over Newspaper Advertising" (Ann Maxwell and Wayne Wanta); "Does Good Work Pay Off? A Preliminary Study of Advertising Awards and Financial Growth" (Ann Maxwell, Charles Frazer, and Wayne Wanta); "Who We Are and What We Choose to Read: A Psychological Exploration of Media Use" (Fang Wan, Ken Doyle, and Mohan Jyoti Dutta); "Third-Person Perception, Message Type, Safer-Sex Campaigns, and Sexual Risk-Taking among Minority 'At-Risk' Youth" (John R. Chapin); "An Exploratory Study of the Synergy Among Ad Attention, Promotional Offers and the Use of Grocery Buyer Cards in Building Customer Loyalty" (Mary Alice Shaver, Hyun-Seung Jin, and Carol Pardun); "The Effect of Idiocentrism and Involvement on Attitude, Cognition and Behavioral Intention with Respect to AIDS Appeal Types" (Mohan Jyoti Dutta); "Recall, Liking and Creativity in TV Commercials: A New Approach" (Gerald Stone, Donna Besser, and Loran Lewis); and "The Presence of Nostalgia in Television Commercials" (Wendy Martin and Wei-Na Lee). (RS)

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Incorporating a Promotional Products Teaching Component into the Advertising Campaigns Course: A Partnership Pilot Program

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Incorporating a Promotional Products Teaching Component into the Advertising Campaigns Course: A Partnership Pilot Program

Abstract

Since the emergence of IMC, it has become increasingly important for students to have an understanding and appreciation of a variety of marketing communications tools. One industry segment that is sometimes overlooked is promotional products. This paper describes the process of incorporating promotional products into the campaigns course through a partnership pilot program. The program's three phases are discussed: preparation through six instructional planning steps, implementation involving four major learning activities, and evaluation including five key outcomes resulting from surveys of students. The paper concludes by providing educators with future recommendations.

Incorporating a Promotional Products Teaching Component into the Advertising Campaigns Course: A Partnership Pilot Program

Introduction

During the past decade, one of the most significant changes in advertising practice has been the emergence and development of multidisciplinary, integrated approaches to advertising and marketing communications (Nowak and Phelps 1994; Schultz, Tannenbaum, and Lauderborn 1993). "Conceptually, IMC suggests that advertising and public relations efforts achieve their greatest impact when coupled together and with other marketing and sales promotion to communicate with consumers through multiple channels" (Griffin and Pasadeos 1998, p. 4). Integrated marketing communications has necessitated changes in all of the major advertising functions (Schultz, Tannenbaum, and Lauderborn 1993).

Advertising education, like advertising practice, must be dynamic as employers now expect modifications in the way students are prepared for the work environment (Duncan, Caywood, and Newsome 1993; Griffin and Pasadeos 1998; Walker, Hanson, Nelson, and Fisher 1998). Many would agree that today, more than ever, students can benefit from a greater awareness, appreciation and understanding of a variety of marketing communication disciplines and specialties (DeLorme and Nowak 1997; Duncan, Caywood, and Newsome 1993). Thus, the purpose of this paper is to explore and describe the process and outcomes of incorporating a promotional products teaching component into the advertising campaigns course through a partnership pilot program. This case study serves to provide educators with guidance in adapting future courses.

Promotional products can be defined as, "useful and/or symbolic products which are used in advertising and promotion as communication vehicles, goodwill reminders, signs, gifts, and incentives. They include ad specialties, premiums, recognition awards, business gifts, and other identification applications" (Bagley 1995, p. 1). Although the use of promotional products in marketing communications campaigns is becoming increasingly important, it is an area that sometimes lacks attention in the curriculum. This neglect has occurred despite the long history and broad scope of the business. For example, promotional products have been used since the 1840s and an estimated 15,000 different types of promotional products comprise this $11 billion dollar industry (Bagley 1995). Perhaps the common misperception that promotional products are just trivial "junk", "trinkets", and "gadgets" still lingers. Yet, the time is ripe for advertising educators and students to consider promotional products as playing a more integral role in marketing communications campaigns and in the classroom.

Background of the Partnership Program

As a professor striving to better prepare students by staying current with our dynamic field, I have been regularly participating in various industry-sponsored instructional workshops and seminars including the Promotional Products Association International (PPAI) Very Important Professors (VIP) Program ("Fifteen VIPs Get Special Treatment" 1998). The Promotional Products Association, formerly known as the Specialty Advertising Association International, consists of approximately 5,300 distributors and suppliers and plays an important role in the business by organizing and implementing trade shows, research, membership education, public education, and representation of the industry in legislative matters (Bagley 1995).

During this VIP program, I attended different educational presentations from top-level PPAI member suppliers and distributors and also toured the exhibit show floor of over 3,000 suppliers. Through this insightful experience, I learned firsthand about the roles and interactions of the various participants in the industry as well as the range of creative and effective ways in which promotional products can help solve marketing communications problems. At this time, I also gathered ideas, suggestions, and instructional materials to help successfully incorporate promotional products material into the classroom.

A regional association of PPAI kindly agreed to sponsor my travel to participate in the educational event. In return, I shared what I learned from the experience by publishing an invited article in the industry journal and speaking at a local chapter meeting where I summarized the highlights of the VIP program and outlined my teaching plan. At this meeting, the president of the regional association approached me regarding the possibility of a university partnership.

I immediately expressed enthusiasm and interest regarding this idea. First, our new advertising and public relations major is growing rapidly and our department is seriously considering offering integrated communications campaigns courses. This proposed partnership opportunity seemed an excellent initial step in enhancing our curriculum. Second, we are located in a large metropolitan market and have a firmly established student internship program with strong ties to the business and mass media community. However, our connections needed strengthening in the promotional products arena. Thus, after discussing this idea with the School Director and gaining approval and support, we began the first phase of the project.

Project Phase Number One: Preparing

This first and important phase of the project involved planning and preparation. Specifically, preparation entailed six consecutive activities: 1) meeting to set project objectives and scope, 2) selecting the sample, 3) writing the promotional program plan, 4) tailoring the course syllabus, 5) modifying the instructional coursepack, and 6) formulating the initial questionnaire/collecting benchmark data.

Preparation Number One: Meeting to Set Project Objectives and Scope

I scheduled a planning meeting with the president of the regional PPAI group to discuss the objectives and scope of the project. During this meeting, a pilot educational program involving promotional products was suggested. The primary goals were for students: to have a greater awareness and appreciation of the $11 billion promotional products business, stronger practical training in the effective use of promotional products as part of an overall campaign, and serious consideration of careers in the promotional product industry. Through this educational endeavor, it is hoped that over time there will be an increase in the level of acceptance, professionalism, and number of students highly-qualified for entry-level positions in the business.

Preparation Number Two: Selecting the Sample

Next, we considered the different advertising and public relations courses in which to implement the project. An undergraduate advertising copywriting and campaigns course that I have been teaching was deemed an appropriate match for this effort. This is an applied, capstone course offered to upper-division junior and senior level advertising and public relations majors. Thus, a total of thirty-eight students consisting of two-sections of this course participated in this pilot program during Fall semester 1998. Prior to enrolling in the course, all students completed the introduction to advertising course, many had taken other advertising, public relations, and marketing courses, and some had internship experience.

This advertising campaigns course is designed to achieve the following outcomes: increase student knowledge and practice of marketing communications campaign planning, creative strategies and techniques, and copywriting skills. The learning objectives of the new promotional products component of the course were for students to gain a better understanding of: what promotional products are, how the industry is organized, the role of promotional products in an integrated communications plan, the principles of making good decisions in using promotional products, and the role of creative thinking in making promotional products work (Fletcher 1994).

Preparation Number Three: Writing the Promotional Program Plan

After we reached agreement regarding the goals, scope, and sample of this particular project, I then carefully developed a research proposal which clearly stated the purpose of the program, briefly outlined the instructional activities, and provided general expectations and the planned time frame for completion. It was important to commit the plan to writing for documentation and evaluation purposes. The PPAI regional association Board of Directors unanimously approved the research proposal and agreed to provide funding to help support this program.

Preparation Number Four: Tailoring the Course Syllabus

In this activity of the project, the existing syllabus for the course was carefully reviewed and then tailored to incorporate promotional products in-class discussions, guest presentations, and student assignments throughout the semester. Since I had experience teaching this course many times over the past three years, I felt comfortable modifying the course to include a promotional products component without diluting the primary course structure and goals. A copy of this modified course syllabus was sent to the regional association president and Board of Directors and was unanimously approved.

Preparation Number Five: Modifying the Instructional Course Pack

After reviewing the instructional materials received from the PPAI VIP Program, I carefully selected three case studies that seemed appropriate and especially interesting (Fletcher 1994). These three promotional products student assignments were added to a coursepack workbook on campaign planning that I had previously developed. The existing coursepack included: copies of the overhead slides used in class throughout the semester; creative thinking exercises; examples of product and consumer research tools; strategic planning exercises; practice scenarios and assignments for writing print advertisements, radio scripts and television storyboards; lists of relevant advertising websites and Internet search engines; and job search planning and strategy information.

In addition to the three case studies selected from the PPAI materials, I also developed an original case study based on my previous research and expectation that students would find the topic interesting and involving. A list of articles and other reading materials pertinent to this final case were compiled and placed on reserve in the library. To extend and reinforce in-class learning regarding the promotional product component and to assist with the students' case studies, I also compiled photocopied promotional products instructional materials and examples into a folder and placed it on reserve at the university library (see Appendix A). Students were notified and reminded of the case study readings notebook and promotional products folder contents and availability for use. This provided all students with fair access to these materials to read and photocopy as needed.

Preparation Number Six: Formulating Initial Questionnaire/Collecting Benchmark Data

Next, a questionnaire was developed to provide a benchmark measure of advertising students' existing general awareness, knowledge, perceptions, and experiences regarding promotional products prior to the educational project implementation. The one-page questionnaire, which consisted of a series of open-ended questions, was distributed to students to complete at the beginning of the first day of class during class time. Since this was an exploratory study, open-end questions which allow for more elaborate comments and explanations written in the respondents' own words from their point of view were deemed appropriate. A total of thirty-seven questionnaires were completed and a summary of the results is provided below.

Defining Promotional Products

The first question asked, *What is a promotional product?* A number of student definitions seemed to correctly relate to advertising specialty items. For example, students wrote, "an item that displays a company's logo or slogan", "a giveaway item that is used to create brand awareness. It has the company or product's name on it", "something given to a consumer free of charge or at a low price to promote a product or company", "something you get for free to promote somebody's something", "things like pens, coffee mugs, etc. to give to people with a logo or name of a company", and "an item distributed for promotional purposes with your company name/logo on it (also address, phone number etc.)". However, only one student definition -- "a product that works in conjunction with an advertising campaign to promote an entity" seemed to initially acknowledge the role of promotional products within an overall campaign.

Other student definitions of a promotional product focused on other forms of incentives such as premiums and samples. For instance, some students wrote that a promotional product was a: "sample product that may come free with another", "an additional product or service you receive when signing up for something, buying something, or ordering something", "sample item distributed to create awareness of a product", "a product that is given for free with the purchase of a particular item", and "material, coupons etc. brought to public's attention to buy their product".

Several students provided vague definitions. For example, these types of definitions read, "a product that is reduced in price or made aware of by public by promotion and distribution", "an item for sale that's connected to a large event", "a product that is only advertised for a short amount of time", "a fairly new product on the market that needs a lot of promotion to establish recognition and success", "something offered to buyers immediately", and "a product that is only out for a short time or limited quantity available."

Examples and Experiences with Promotional Products

The second item on the questionnaire asked students to *Please provide three examples of promotional products*. Advertising student responses which included examples of specialty items ranged from t-shirts being the most frequently reported (14 mentions) followed by coffee mugs (6 mentions), pens (6 mentions), hats/caps (5 mentions), and refrigerator magnets (4 mentions). Other top-of-mind specialty item examples included: balls, bumper stickers, clocks, condoms, coozies, keychains, lunchboxes, notebooks, pins, and posters. A related question asked, *Based on your own experiences, what has been your favorite promotional product and why?* For this group, t-shirts were the most commonly reported favorite promotional product, followed by refrigerator magnets. The rational provided for both was that they were very useful and that one can never have too many.

Knowledge of the Use of Promotional Products

The third item of the questionnaire asked, *When do you think promotional products are used by marketers?* These advertising students overwhelmingly reported that they believed promotional products were used to increase awareness of a company or brand name in order to help introduce a new product to the market or revive an existing but struggling product. For instance, their comments included, "promotional products are used by marketers during the introduction of a new product", "when they are trying to build up their company", "if they are coming out with a new product or trying to rediscover an old product", "to promote a new product and reinforce its usage", "when the product itself is being introduced or sales are slow", and "when a new product is out or an old product is losing favoritism" and "when they need a boost in sales or when there's a new product that they want people to try." While a few responses indicated seasonality associated with the use of promotional products such as "special times of the year (Christmas, back-to-school)", only two students seemed to recognize the value of regularly using promotional products for advertising purposes "throughout the duration of the product" and "all the time to sell the product".

Views Regarding Successful Promotional Products

The next benchmark measure asked, *What do you think makes a promotional product successful?* By far, the most common response by these advertising students was the usefulness of the promotional product, followed by quality and level of involvement. For example, in their own words students wrote, "when it is used and remembered", "usefulness, creativeness", "genuinely useful (not just a gag item)", "if it is an item that is practical and useful -- not a cheap item", "its use to people. Is it just junk or something cool, creative, and eye-catching as well as useful?", "I think if any person -- whether adult, child, male, or female is able to use the promotional product, then it is a successful one", "the involvement it gives the consumer", and "if it lives up to the consumer's expectations."

Project Phase Number Two: Implementing the Program

The next phase of the project involved the actual implementation of the program. This consisted of the following four categories of activities: 1) strengthening knowledge base through lectures and guest speakers, 2) practicing applications through case studies, and 3) evaluating knowledge base and applications, and 4) enhancing and extending learning outside the classroom.

Activity Number One: Strengthening Knowledge Base Through Lectures/Guest Speakers

From the lesson plan outlines provided by the PPAI which served as my guide (Fletcher 1994), the students gained a knowledge base of promotional products through general in-class lectures, discussions, and question-and-answer sessions on the topic. As a basis for discussion, we used the following definition of promotional products: "Promotional products are useful or decorative articles of merchandise, sometimes imprinted with an organization's name, message, or logo, that are used as advertising, sales promotion, and motivational communications media" (Fletcher, 1994, p. 6). I stressed to students the differences between specialty items and other incentives such as premiums. The role that promotional products can play in the planning and implementation of a successful campaign was emphasized throughout the course. In particular, we discussed how promotional products can work synergistically with traditional advertising mass media such as television, radio and magazines.

However, it is important to note that a focal point of this component of the course was special presentations by two invited promotional products professionals. Together, the president and president-elect of the regional association who were both also promotional products business owners, visited my two classes at the university campus to enthusiastically share their knowledge and professional experience in the promotional products industry. The School Director also attended the presentation and provided support.

The instructional topics covered included a brief history of the business, how it currently operates today, and future directions and avenues of this industry. Also explained was the valuable role of the PPAI and the regional associations of PPAI. The speakers each also described their "typical" day in the life of a distributor, provided examples of everyday challenges and opportunities, discussed career opportunities in the field, presented examples of some of their own creative work as it was integrated into campaigns, and distributed to students promotional product samples such as pencils and refrigerator magnets as well as promotional products catalogs. Students found these materials especially helpful in generating ideas for their case assignments and final campaign project. These guest speakers' presentation content was excellent, their insights and examples were especially appreciated, and their format was energetic.

Activity Number Two: Practicing Application Through Case Study Assignments

As part of the final grade for the course, each student individually was required to complete four case study assignments in which they applied their knowledge regarding the use of promotional products to help solve marketing communications problems. Each consecutive case study was intended to be more involving and challenging than the previous one. Emphasis was also placed on being concise, as students were allowed only three typed pages maximum for this component of each assignment. Prior to each assignment, I clarified in-class the situation and goals of the case as well as my expectations. Any student questions about the promotional product case studies were efficiently and effectively handled via the Internet through the use of e-mail. The four case study assignment instructions and samples of student work are presented next.

<u>Summary of Case Study Number One: Analysis of Personal Experiences</u>

In the first assignment, students described a promotional product that they or someone in their family had recently received, indicated the company that gave it to them, speculated on the company's objectives in doing so, analyzed the appropriateness of the promotional product within the context of the marketing plan, and described what the promotional item conveyed about the company's image (Fletcher 1994). This assignment provides a good introduction to thinking about promotional products. Since students were reflecting and sharing their own experiences, they became more involved and interested in the topic. It became something that they could relate to personally. There were many interesting student experiences for this assignment. Several excerpts are presented below:

> "...a desk calendar I received at work. It is from a company from which we buy our stationary and business cards...I believe this item is appropriate because it conveys the importance of keeping track of dates and deadlines. When we order stationary, we may only have enough on hand to last us a few days. Knowing that the company shares calendars with its customers leads me to believe that they will not let us go without stationary if we say we need it in three days. A calendar expresses, 'time is money...'"

> "...a key chain, which I received from a race shop. The shop installed a high performance air filter in my car about eight months ago. Hard to miss in its yellow splendor, the plastic keychain proudly displays: Route 66 Motorsports Racing coupled with its address and phone number for all to see...I could not think of a better item than a keychain for Route 66 to advertise with. This is based on the fact that all of their customers own cars and therefore must own keys. Another advantage of the use of the keychain is the easily accessible phone number. We all know how big of a pain it can be to lug out the phone book. When I want to call the shop, all I have to do is find my keys."

> "...a promotional t-shirt from the Coca-Cola Company promoting their new citrus-flavored soda, Citra. The t-shirt was packaged in a compressed form to take up the same amount of space as a 12 ounce can of soda. When I went to purchase a Coke from a vending machine, I received the shirt instead. It also had three quarters packaged with it so I could still purchase my Coca-Cola. I believe the Coca-cola company had the objective of brand awareness in mind when they devised this promotion. It acted as a great way to let people know about the product because I shared the story of how I got the t-shirt with several people each time I wore it..."

> "Recently, I went car shopping with my little brother who is in search of his first automobile. We went to a Saturn dealership, among many others. Almost immediately after stepping onto the car lot, a salesman greeted us. I was certain we were stuck with this guy for at least an hour. Instead, he handed us a pen and explained that it was complimentary. He said that it was all we would need to drive our favorite car off the lot. The pen was metallic gold and had, "Saturn" engraved in black. He explained that it was part of their "sign and drive" promotion. We did not have to do anything but sign the papers and drive home happy...The pen fit well with their "sign and drive" program. It may not have ensured that we would sign on the dotted line but it did make it more tempting..."

Summary of Case Study Number Two: Travel Industry

The intention of the second case study was to give students practice in using promotional products as a tool for communicating with consumers. Specifically, the case involved Holiday Inn and Embassy Suites hotels which are located in a very competitive travel market -- the Chevy Chase Pavilion in Washington D.C. (Fletcher 1994). Students were instructed to develop a campaign that would attract business from parents of students at American University. Thus, the target market was 1600 families whose sons and daughters would be entering American University in Washington.

Students were required to develop a campaign slogan, select appropriate promotional products and defend their choices, describe how they would tie these promotional products into an overall, cohesive plan, and determine how they would measure the effectiveness of the program (Fletcher 1994). Some students conducted background research on the case problem, Washington, D.C. area, American University, and the target audience.

To provide examples of student solutions to the case in terms of promotional products, selected excerpts are presented below. However, it is important to note that the material below is a subset of the overall plans that the students developed.

> "...The hotels should mail out brochures to the parents of all the students who attend American University. Along with this brochure, they could send...a bumper sticker with a phrase on it such as 'American University Parent'. The hotel's name and logo would be visible somewhere on the sticker..."

> "...Parents feel distant, whether their child's college is twenty minutes or several states away. I recommend "We Bring You Closer," as the promotional theme for Holiday Inn and Embassy Suites. The program would include a home-shaped magnet printed with the theme, and the logo and phone number of both hotels. The magnet, along with a brochure would be sent to all registered first year students of American University..."

> "...A calendar...would be appropriate to either mail to the parent's home directly, or hand them out at the University's orientation. The calendar can already have marked the American University's sports events, homecoming week, parent's weekend, graduation, school breaks and holidays, and any special performances...On each month, the pictures could be of some of the city's tourist attractions. It could also include pictures of some of the school events that are happening in that month. A general map of Washington D.C. and of the school can be inserted in the back of the calendar...Most importantly, included on every page should be the name of the hotels with their phone number, address..."

> "...'College Survival Kits' will feature a cotton t-shirt with American University's red, white, and blue logo on the front. The t-shirts will also have the logos of the hotels featured prominently on the back. The kits will also contain cups, pens, a small pad of stationary and a towel which will also be imprinted with both the school's logo and the logos of the hotels. All the promotional products will be packaged in small tote bags that also bear the name of both the school and hotels...The kits will be handed out at the orientation seminars..."

Summary of Case Study Number Three: Promoting Library Memberships

The purpose of the third case study was to give students practice in creating a not-for-profit promotional program for a community library (Fletcher 1994). The Kern County Library located in California wished to increase the number of library card holders by 200 for the year, especially among new Hispanic residents. They wanted to designate "Discovery Day" -- a special day to encourage use of one of the branch libraries in the system. Students were required to develop a slogan for a cohesive campaign, select promotional products, justify their decisions, and describe how they would measure the effectiveness of the promotion at the end (Fletcher 1994).

A number of sample exerpts of student work are provided below. It should be noted again, that the material below is a subset of the overall campaigns that the students developed.

> "...When most people think of libraries, they think of books. It is important to let people know that there are other types of media at a library besides books. Giving away mouse pads reminds people that there are computers at libraries as well. The mouse pads can have the slogan, 'The Other Discover Card,' written on it as a reminder. The library should also offer typical promotional products such as pens, pencils, and bookmarks..."

> "...I would set up assemblies at local schools to inform the students of the benefits the library offers them. After each assembly, I would have a table set up where the students could sign up for their library card. When they sign up, they get a free bookbag with bookmarks and book covers inside. Also inside would be a letter to the children's parents discussing the benefits and resources the library has to offer them. This letter or brochure would be bilingual..."

> "...The Discovery Dyamite/Descubrimiento Dinamita! promotional program will be promoted through direct mail sent out to nearby residents. These pamphlets are in the form of a newsletter that details the Discovery Day programs that are scheduled at the library...The mail-out includes information about books, magazines, and other material available in Spanish. Residents can find bookmarks within the envelopes. These bookmarks tie into the theme...The Kern County Library logo, the telephone number of Community Relations, and the web address of the library are at the bottom of each bookmark..."

> "...we can produce a series of small adventure comic books, each following the escapades of Discovery Dave, for distribution among the target audience. Short video presentations can go out on loan to grammar and middle schools...They will

be presented in a similar manner to the comic books wherein Discovery Dave gets involved with an exploit, only to realize he needs vital information from -- the library! Thanks to his trusty library card, he has all the resources of the library at his fingertips. Our daring hero would also be the virtual host at the library's new web-site...By making the character both bi-lingual and culturally relevant, he can be counted on to reach across racial lines and appeal to all students' backgrounds..."

Summary of Case Study Number Four: Promoting In-Line Skating Safety

For the final case study, students working alone were required to produce all aspects of the creative portion of a marketing communication campaign and were instructed to incorporate the use of promotional products as part of the campaign. As stated earlier, I had compiled a list of articles and other reading materials pertinent to the final case and placed it on reserve in the library. Also, students were offered extra credit if they conducted and documented additional primary and secondary research on the final case topic in order to support their strategic decisions and to inspire creative thinking. At the appropriate time during class, I distributed a handout of project research suggestions to students and also reminded them of the relevant Internet search engines that were listed in the coursepack.

The final case involved Sunshine Inline Skating, a fictitious local association which serves to support and enhance the activity of inline skating. As noted before, this project was an original case study that I personally developed based on previous research and my expectation that students would find the topic interesting. The instructions were as follows: Inline skating is becoming one of America's fastest growing recreational activities. Today, more than 31 million people skate for fitness, fun, racing, or hockey (Gear Up! Guide to In-line Skating 1997). However, inline skating has also been associated with numerous accidents and injuries -- especially among school-age children. Thus, the assignment was to create a marketing communications campaign that would increase inline skating safety awareness and education among the target audience in the local community.

Students were required to produce all of the following items and tie them into a cohesive campaign: a two-page maximum typed creative workplan to justify the work, a one to three page clear description regarding the incorporation of one or more promotional products as part of the campaign, a full-color magazine advertisement (8 1/2 x 11"), a thirty-second TV spot in storyboard form, and a thirty second radio spot in typed script form. The students were also required to present their projects to the class. A number of sample exerpts of student work regarding this case are provided below. Again, this is a subset of the overall campaigns that the students developed.

> "...In cooperation with the safety awareness campaign, Sunshine will develop a Skate Safe Manual. It will contain skating tips from the pros as well as advice on how to be a safe inline skater. Recreational and qualifying skating events...will serve as an excellent outlet to distribute this pamphlet. Included in the pamphlet will be a fluorescent sticker with the Sunshine Inline Skating logo..."

> "...The promotional products to be used along with the 'Road Armor Rules' campaign are keychains in the form of miniature helmets, elbow, and knee pads. Children can attach them to the zippers of their backpacks, and latchkey kids can put house keys on them. The key chains will carry the 'Road Armor Rules' slogan, together with the Sunshine Inline Skating logo. This will encourage coherence within the campaign, nicely tying in the other advertising. The channels of distribution will be through schools, sports clubs, the YMCA..."

> "...In order to promote inline skating safety, the use of an educational, fun-seminar on proper gear and procedures would be beneficial. By offering specialty products such as baseball caps, t-shirts, and a few inline skating safety products to persons who successfully answer a survey/test of their knowledge after the seminar, a greater turnout could be achieved. It would also be beneficial to have speakers from the pro inline skater category...Offering the speakers more expensive safety gear to model at the seminar and in future competitions can act as a lasting and moving advertisement...When the skater was speaking at the seminar, or seen later on television or in competitions, the SIS name would be promoted..."

> "...for this campaign, I would recommend...bumper stickers...The typical inline skater's helmet is made with more covering for the back of the head than the average bicycle helmet...So why not take advantage of this extra space, and slap on a bumper sticker for the helmet?...If the sticker were also reflective, that would be one more reason to use it. So, by distributing these free helmet bumper stickers, not only would we be effectively rewarding skaters that are smart enough to wear a helmet but also we would be making sure that our message of safety is spread to everyone who sees the back of the skater's head. On top of that, we will also be helping each and every skater that accepts the free sticker to actually be safer when skating near cars..."

Activity Number Three: Evaluating Knowledge Base and Applications

The case study assignments played a major role in assessing student knowledge of promotional products. However, throughout the semester, I also included some test questions regarding the use of promotional products in campaigns. Some of these questions were multiple-choice type questions. In other instances, the questions were short essay questions that required students to think, reflect, and apply their knowledge.

Based on my strengthened understanding of the business from my VIP Program participation and materials, I constructed evaluation sheets for the case study assignments consisting of specific criteria deemed important in the use of promotional products (see Appendix B). This evaluation sheet was used for consistency in project grading. A more detailed evaluation sheet was used for grading the students' final, fourth case study projects.

In making some general comments, I would say that a number of worthwhile promotional product ideas emerged from students case study assigments. Most students effectively linked promotional products to the campaign through the use of an overall theme or slogan. However, fewer students made references to promotional products offerings within the traditional mass media advertisements that they developed for the campaign. Another area that needed improvement was in terms of the creative distribution of promotional products within the context of a larger plan. It is also worth noting that in the earlier assignments, some students tended to emphasize discount programs, price-breaks, and other "deals". Perhaps, as college students, they are financially sensitive and this was reflected in their assigned work. It may also relate to their perceptions of the word "promotional" in promotional products or their interpretations of the cases.

Activity Number Four: Enhancing and Extending Learning Outside the Classroom

Local PPAI Chapter Dinner Meeting

Toward the end of the semester, the School Director, several students from the class, and I were kindly invited to attend a local PPAI chapter dinner meeting. There, we visited again with the president and president-elect of the regional association, were introduced to other promotional products professionals (my student guests had a prime opportunity to network), checked out some showcased eye-catching exhibits, provided the association with an update of our partnership project, and listened to an interesting presentation on how to write a business plan. Plus, we all enjoyed a delicious meal and good dinner conversation. It was a very worthwhile meeting.

Internship Recruitment Event

At our university, students are strongly encouraged to participate in campus organizations that enrich the classroom experience. One such organization is the student advertising and public relations club. Twice a year, this club sponsors an event where students and community professionals can meet to network and discuss internship possibilities. During this informal mixer activity, students have the opportunity to learn more about advertising agencies, public relations firms, corporations, not-for-profit organizations, promotional products companies, and more. Many student interns are hired directly or secure professional positions as a results of internships.

Through the use of e-mail and traditional postcards, I invited some member companies of the regional PPAI association to attend this event. It was recommended that they prepare an information handout regarding the internship's job description to be distributed to students during the event. Representatives from promotional products companies participated along with other advertising and public relations practitioners in the community. I attended this event with two main intentions. First, to provide encouragement and support to the students and second, to serve as a liaison by directing and introducing students to the promotional products professionals to help them actively recruit interns. From my observations, they stayed quite busy enthusiastically talking with numerous interested students. In fact, this semester three students from our School have promotional products internships. This event was very well attended by both professionals and students and participants seemed to really appreciate the unique and worthwhile opportunity.

Project Phase Number Three: Evaluating the Program

The third and final phase of the project involved evaluating the program. At the end of the semester, a second survey was conducted to gather changes in student perceptions and opinions of the promotional products industry after implementation of this pilot program as well as feedback regarding the teaching component itself. Specifically, a follow-up questionnaire was developed which was distributed to all students at the beginning of the last day of class. A total of thirty-five follow-up questionnaires were completed. In sum, the results of this open-ended questionnaire provide support for the outcomes of the program and are presented below.

Outcome Number One: Greater Awareness and Understanding of Promotional Products

The first open-ended item on the follow-up questionnaire asked, *What did you learn about promotional products from this course?* Student responses reflected a greater appreciation of the effectiveness of promotional products within an overall campaign. For example, "I got a much clearer idea of the purpose of promotional products as well as a better understanding of how to incorporate them into an ad campaign", "that there is a lot more involved in the process of developing strategies for promotional products", "although I was somewhat familiar with them to begin with, I learned how to better the implementation process in the overall campaign", "I learned about their use, the development of them, and their ties to advertising and marketing campaigns", and "a better understanding of how to select a promotional product for a campaign and how to incorporate them." The following student comments provide further elaboration:

> "I learned how promotional products are designed and used effectively in advertising. Also, knowledge I gained concerning their impact when used in conjunction with a good ad campaign was very useful."

> "The different types and avenues that are used to promote companies through products. We learned how to pick products that will be relevant and useful to our campaigns."

> "That promotional products work. People love free stuff and if that free stuff reminds them of your company or product, then it has been well worth doing a promotional product."

Students seemed genuinely impressed by the large selection of different types of promotional product choices available. For example, relevant student quotations are provided below:

> "I learned a lot about the wide variety of choices for promotional products. I knew companies often used coffee mugs and key chains but it was interesting to see how creative some companies could get. I also learned about how important it is for the promotional products to relate to your overall idea and campaign."

> "I knew what promotional products were but I had no idea there were more than 10,000 different kinds. I also learned the amount of advertising that is involved with making your campaign successful by the use of a promotional product."

Students also appreciated learning about the industry size and scope. For example, "Although I'd seen them before, I'd never really thought of the field as really part of advertising" and "now I have a clear picture about what this industry is all about".

Outcome Number Two: Gained Insight From Promotional Products Guest Speakers

The second question asked, *What is your opinion regarding the promotional product guest speakers' presentation?* Students were very favorable in their responses including: "The guest speakers' presentation was informative as well. It was fun to actually see the different promotional products that have been used", "the presentation was a good way to clarify the uses of promotional products", "the guest speakers were very knowledgeable. I was impressed with their insight of promotional products and their ability to take promotional products to a new level", "they were very helpful and interesting. I found that they really made that part of their industry look exciting and fun", "I liked the guest speakers. I think it helped illustrate the power of a promotional product", "very informative. Two speakers was good", "fabulous. I thought it was a great opportunity to listen to someone in the field who is successful", "it was interesting! Getting the catalogs was great because it gave us a good idea of what's out there and we got free stuff!", "great examples, good ideas, helpful hints to help me for my future career" and "I thought that they were funny and entertaining but also gave us a lot of useful information and tips about their line of work."

Outcome Number Three: New Appreciation of the Promotional Products Industry

The third question asked, *Has your view of the promotional products industry changed after taking this course? If so, how?* Most students indicated that their view of the promotional products industry did change after taking this course. Specifically, their perceptions of the industry became more favorable as they gained a greater appreciation and respect for the business. For example, "I really didn't have a well formed view of the industry before this course", "it has changed because I never really took notice of them until we started studying them", "it has changed because I now understand and appreciate the weight that this industry carries", "I now feel that the industry is a very effective but little-understood method of advertising", "I didn't realize it was such a big business and people actually specialize in it", "I have more respect for the business and don't take the products for granted", "I wasn't aware of the depth and variety of the industry", "it seems like a fun industry and has exciting job opportunities" and "I had no idea that there was an entire field of jobs available in the promotional products area."

Outcome Number Four: Stronger Interest In a Career Involving Promotional Products

The fourth question asked, *Would you be more likely to consider an internship or full-time job in the promotional products industry as a result of taking this course? Please explain.* About half the students in the class responded positively to this question. Examples of their responses include the following: "yes. The material and guest speakers sparked my interest about marketing and promotional products", "yes I would. Before this course, I didn't even consider promotional products to be an industry so there is a better chance for me to seek out an internship in this area now", "definitely! The industry is an exciting combination of marketing, advertising, and public relations. I think it must be a great way to gain insight into all areas of integrated marketing", "yes, because the course explained vividly what promotional products are about in an interesting fashion" and "I would like to have an internship in this field. It's very interesting to me."

Outcome Number Five: Reflected on Learning Process Regarding Promotional Products

The next question asked, *What is your opinion of the promotional product component of this class?* The process of completing these questionnaires was also of instructional value as it allowed students the opportunity to reflect on the overall program experience including the importance of what they learned and how they learned in terms of the "big picture".

Responses by these students were overwhelmingly positive. The students really enjoyed the guest speakers' presentations and also liked the case study assignments because they could relate to the scenario topics. Specific quotations are: "good idea. Expose us to an often overlooked field", "it was very interesting to learn about this often forgotten marketing tool", "it was very interesting. I view promotional products in a different light now" and "definitely a lot of useful techniques that I will use in my future". More elaborate comments are provided below:

> "The promotional product component of this course was very informative and helpful in increasing my knowledge of successful campaigns for advertising. The three promotional product assignments were good practice in developing ad campaigns."
>
> "I appreciated the assignments that were required for this course. I liked the fact that they were applying the information to an everyday situation."
>
> "This component of this course was effectively presented and writing exercises used in conjunction with in-class learning were helpful in gaining an overall understanding."
>
> "I enjoyed learning about promotional products. I also found the assignments to be interesting and somewhat challenging. They allowed me to practice using creativity."

> "I think it was really good. People, including myself, don't understand that using promotional products can make your campaign that much more effective."

A related question asked, *What are your suggestions for improving the promotional product component of this course/What else would you like to learn about promotional products?* Student suggestions included, "more guest speakers", "do a bigger project", "maybe let the student pick the organization", "visiting the product manufacturers," gaining more information on "how they market themselves", "the exact process used to make certain products" and "more about the budgeting part".

Conclusions and Future Recommendations

This partnership pilot program explored and described the process and outcomes of incorporating a promotional products teaching component into the advertising campaigns course. Based on the professor's evaluation of student work as well as students' self-reports of this instructional component, we would judge this initial project to be successful in achieving realistic objectives. Through the various program activities, we believe that the promotional products component enhanced the course. The program increased student understanding of the nature and role of promotional products in campaigns, provided students with practical training in creatively using promotional products to help solve marketing communications problems, and sparked an increased awareness and a greater appreciation of the scope, operations, and opportunities of the promotional products industry.

Students provided positive feedback regarding the promotional product component of the course, and were enthusiastic about their new insights. We feel confident that promotional products will remain top-of-mind for these students and that many will consider promotional products in their future professional endeavors. At the same time, this pilot project provided me with instructional ideas and experiences to continue strengthening the teaching and learning process especially as it relates to promotional products. It is hoped that this initial program will serve as a model that can be applied to other courses at our university, as well as other universities throughout the nation. To facilitate and strengthen this next step, we now present the following recommendations.

First, to prepare to integrate promotional products in the classroom, advertising and public relations instructors are encouraged to participate in one of the Promotional Products Association International (PPAI) VIP professors programs which are offered bi-annually. Second, if partnership programs are arranged, it is essential that those involved in the partnership maintain regular communication throughout the planning, implementation and evaluation phases of the project. In addition to the traditional means of communication via mail correspondence and telephone calls, electronic e-mail over the Internet served as a very efficient and effective means of communication. Third, when planning a partnership program, consider multiple avenues for mutual participation that extend beyond classroom activities. In our case, students seemed to greatly benefit from the co-curricular activities that reinforced in-class learning. Fourth, it is recommended that future programs design more rigorous pre and post project evaluation methods. For example, a more detailed questionnaire consisting of both close-ended and open-ended items could more accurately measure differences in awareness, knowledge, attitudes, and self-reported behavioral intentions while still gathering students' personal insights and experiences in their own words.

Fifth, there are a number of suggestions for lectures and discussions within the classroom environment. It is critical that students obtain a clear understanding of the different forms of promotional products (e.g., specialty items, premiums etc.) at the beginning of the course and how each can be used appropriately. Bringing different promotional product samples to share in class or having students collect and present them in class can greatly foster student interest and involvement. Also, based on my assessment of student work, it would be wise for instructors to emphasize in lectures and discussions not only the tangible products themselves, but also the importance of creative and effective packaging and distribution of the promotional products in the campaign and how they can be linked to more traditional mass media advertising. To test in-class learning, the development of a comprehensive testbank of different forms of questions regarding promotional products and the industry would be very helpful.

The sixth recommendation is to invite more promotional products guest speakers to visit the class and if possible, schedule their presentations throughout the semester. Student reactions to the guest speakers' presentations was extremely positive and they encouraged future programs to certainly continue this aspect of the program. Seventh, it would be worthwhile for instructors to: utilize the collection of case studies provided by the PPAI, review their own existing campaigns case studies for possible incorporation of a promotional products component, or develop original case studies that would provide particularly interesting marketing communication problems requiring the use of promotional products. Instructors are also urged to provide realistic budget parameters for case study assignments and to require students to determine specifically how they would measure the effectiveness of promotional products within a campaign.

An eighth recommendation is to incorporate student groupwork into the promotional products component of the course (Beard 1997). In the current course, groupwork took place in the classroom where students practiced brainstorming exercises, for example. The case study assignments, however, were completed by students individually. Future programs could have at least one case study assignment completed outside the classroom by student groups or teams that could even compete in activities such as the PPAI student competitions. As in many courses, the biggest challenge with this program was the time limitation. Thus, our final recommendation is for professors to set realistic objectives and practice good time-management throughout the semester.

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Appendix A
Promotional Products Instructional Resource List

Booklets

Award-Winning Promotional Ideas, Promotional Products Association International.

Bagley, Dan S. (1995), *Understanding Promotional Products Marketing*, Promotional Products Association International.

Estimate of Promotional Products Distributor Sales (1996), Promotional Products Association International.

Make Promotional Products Work for You (1997), Promotional Products Association International.

Lesson Plans and Case Studies

Fletcher, Alan D. (1994), *Lessons in Promotional Products Marketing,* Promotional Products Association International.

Trade Publications

Counselor

IMPRINT

Potentials in Marketing

Promotional Products Business

Strategic Promotional ADvantages

Other Materials and Information

Advertising Specialty Institute (ASI), news releases

Estimate of Promotional Products Distributor Sales (1996), Promotional Products Association International, brochure

Giles, Bennie F. (1998), "Promotional Products: A Plan for the Medium that Remains to be Seen."

Promotional Products Association International
3125 Skyway Circle North
Irving, Texas 75038
(972) 258-3043 (972) 258-3092 (FAX)

Appendix B
Case Study Evaluation Sheet for Promotional Products

Name: ______________________________ Section: __________________

___ Project On Time

___ Assignment Neat/Professional/Typed

___ Problem Clearly Stated

___ Objective(s) Clearly Stated

___ Target Audience Specifically Defined

___ Promotional Product Idea is Appropriate, Financially Realistic

___ Promotional Product Idea is Creative, Fresh, Clever

___ Promotional Product is Packaged and/or Distributed in a Unique Way

___ Timing of Promotional Product Distribution is Appropriate

___ Promotional Product Theme (Slogan) is Creative

___ Promotional Product(s) Will Likely Have High Frequency Usage

___ Promotional Product(s) Relate to Campaign Theme

___ Promotional Product(s) Carries Organization's Name, Logo/Message

___ Promotional Product(s) Encourages Consumer/Accomplish Objective(s)

___ Decisions Well-Justified and Persuasive

___ Promotional Product Choices Integrate with Overall Campaign

___ Recommended Measurement(s) of Effectiveness are Appropriate

___ Spelling Correct (Zero Typos/Misspellings)

___ Grammar Correct

___ Whiteout or Written Corrections Absent

___ Paper Appropriate Length

Comments:

Adv

INFORMATION CUES IN RENMIN RIBAO ADVERTISEMENTS (1979 – 1998)

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INFORMATION CUES IN RENMIN RIBAO ADVERTISEMENTS (1979 – 1998)

Abstract

A content analysis of 448 print advertisements in Renmin Ribao from 1979 to 1998 was conducted. The Resnick and Stern evaluation criteria were used to determine the level of advertising information content and to trace its development. The result indicated that both product nature and medium characteristics had a significant effect on the information level of advertisements in China. Nevertheless, the changing information levels over time were conflicting and called for further study.

INFORMATION CUES IN RENMIN RIBAO ADVERTISEMENTS (1979 – 1998)

I. INTRODUCTION

Since the "economic reform" and "open door" policy of China in 1979, the Chinese society has undergone tremendous development in the past twenty years. China has become one of the fastest growing economies. In 1978 (just before the economic reform), its per capita GNP was only RMB$379. It increased to RMB$1,103 in 1987 and soared to RMB$4,757 in 1995 (PRC Yearbook, 1996/1997, p.427). Most of the world believes that China is flush with money and corporations have started to promote and to advertise their products to the Chinese. The advertising industry in China has since flourished and becomes one of the fastest growing economic sectors in China. It was reported that the advertising expenditure in 1997 was nearly RMB$46.2 billion and the industry forecast that it would soar to RMB$90 billion in year 2000 (Modern Advertising, Feb. 1998).

Early examinations on the role of advertising in Chinese society through content analysis were conducted by Rice and Lu (1987) and Keown, Jacobs, Schmidt and Ghymn (1988) respectively. A more recent study was carried out by Chan (1994) to study television commercials on different channels in China. Certain hypotheses or conclusions were arrived at from these studies, for example, the studies indicated that the main purpose of advertising in China was to inform and to educate. However, the trend and the advertising content had changed in accord with the social and economic developments in China. Nevertheless, no systematic longitudinal study had been conducted to trace the changing of information levels over time in China and no large-scale study on Chinese newspaper advertisements was ever done[1].

[1]Keown et al had done a research in 1988 to study the information content of advertising in the United States, Japan, South Korea, and the People's Republic of China. The results of this four country-four media study indicated that broadcasting media in China were less informative in comparing with the print media. The number of cues per ad were as followed: TV (1.90), radio (1.94), both magazines and

II. BACKGROUND: REHABILITATION OF ADVERTISING IN CHINA

After the People's Republic of China came into being in 1949, much emphasis was put on improving agricultural and industrial production. Whereas, the tertiary industry had long been neglected as it was considered to be a non-productive business. The advertising industry, by virtue of its being a service industry, was therefore considered to be "unproductive" and consequently it was never accorded with any priority in the national development (Ho and Sin, 1986).

In 1979, however, with the advent of Deng Xiaoping's "market socialism", the development of China's economy and its business environment has changed dramatically and flourished ever since (Xu, 1990). The mass media in China has also undergone tremendous and remarkable changes which is being evident in its pluralistic, more market-oriented and more liberal direction whilst still under the direct or indirect control of the Communist Party (He and Chen, 1998). The role of the advertising industry in the national economy was being assessed afresh. Advertising has then increasingly become important as a business tool in China.

According to Ho and Chan (1989), two developments have added impetus to the rapid growth in the advertising industry.

1. The rapid pace of economic development caused by the economic reform has increased the prosperity of the population at large and enhanced their purchasing power[2].
2. The economic reform prompts a decentralization of trade and decision-making, and a greater reliance on the market forces to guide production. With this reversion to a more decentralized system, competition inevitably intensifies. The demand for information also increases. Hence, advertising served as an efficient form of communication and as a mean to improve the quality of life in the modernized China.

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newspapers (3.27). However, the sample size for the study was quite small, especially for newspapers which included only 22 samples.

[2]According to the PRC Yearbook 1996/1997, the per capita consumption was RMB$184 in 1978 and rose to RMB$550 in 1987 and soared to RMB$2,186 in 1995.

The process to reactivate advertising activities in China reached a climax in early 1982 when the State Council passed a set of provisional regulations to govern the industry. In the same year, the Central Administration for Industry and Commerce also openly stated that '... advertising is an indispensable element in the promotion of economic prosperity. The government views advertising as having the capability and responsibility to promote production, invigorate the economy, increase consumer convenience, develop international economic activities, serve the needs of socialist construction and promote socialist moral standards' (Rice and Lu, 1988). Eventually, an Advertising Association was also found in Beijing primarily to promote advertising activities and to explore the nature, direction and roles of advertising in a socialist economy (Ho and Sin, 1986).

Since the revival of advertising activities in China, there was a steady growth in the industry's turnover. The total advertising revenue stood at RMB$118 million in 1981, climbing to nearly RMB$1.5 billion in 1988, RMB$13.4 billion in 1993 and recently to RMB$46.2 billion in 1997 (Modern Advertising, Feb. 1998).

In 1985, a survey regarding the attitudes and beliefs about advertising was being launched in Fuzhou and Beijing among Chinese managerial personnel (Semenik, Zhou and Moore, 1986). Among the 192 respondents, 73 per cent agreed or strongly agreed that advertising promoted economic advancement; 83 per cent agreed that advertising was a good business tool; and 79 per cent agreed that advertising was necessary for effective competition. Furthermore, most of the managers felt that product information (80%), price information (56%), and consumer education (54%) should be the main purpose of advertising. Conclusively, 57 per cent of the respondents felt that advertising provided information and helped consumers to make better purchase decisions.

In 1992, a study on advertising pattern of 100 enterprises in Beijing reported that they had been using advertising continuously as a marketing tool. Furthermore, advertising became more and more essential as nearly 40 per cent of the respondents assured that they would increase their advertising budget in the coming years. It was worth mentioning that 34 per cent would maintain their existing advertising budget.

Advertising was also generally accepted by the Chinese audience as a major means for marketing information and communication. Studies indicated that 67 per cent of the respondents, Beijing citizens, accepted television advertising though they asked for stricter regulations (Zhao and Chen, 1995).

III. LITERATURE REVIEW: INFORMATION ANALYSIS OF CHINESE ADVERTISEMENTS

In 1987, Rice and Lu presented an initial examination of the role of advertising in Chinese society through a content analysis of magazine advertisements in China (Rice and Lu, 1988). The information content of 472 magazine advertisements from 349 Chinese magazines in Tianjin and Beijing during the summer of 1987 was examined. Resnick and Stern's classification system (1977) which determined the level of advertising information based on 14 criteria or cues was being used as a yardstick for the study.

The Resnik and Stern's information classification system included:

price or value	quality
performance	components or contents
availability	special offers
taste	packaging or shape
guarantees/warranties	safety
nutrition	independent research
new ideas	company-sponsored research

(Refer to Appendix I for details of conceptual definitions)

As a result, 100 per cent of the advertisements being studied was assessed as informative based on the Resnik and Stern's criterion with an average of 2.26 cues per advertisement.

The authors hypothesized that there were two main factors, which contributed to this high information content of the Chinese magazine advertising.

1. The limited experience of most Chinese citizens with consumer purchases led to high-involvement decision making. Since 1949, it was the first time for a wide variety of consumer goods to be opened to the Chinese consumers and these consumers could be viewed as beginners in their consumption experience. This unfamiliarity with consumer purchasing, combined with low income, made many purchase decisions relatively high-involvement decisions. Hence, most of the consumers were typical "information seekers"; actively searching for information content found in advertisements.

2. The Chinese government stressed that advertising served as an important function in educating the consumers and promoting market socialism; it should therefore be accurate and healthy. The Chinese managers showed strong support for this governmental policy and believed that the main purpose of advertising was to provide information.

With respect to the future, Rice and Lu hypothesized that advertising content in China would change as the economic and social reforms continued. They stated that as the average Chinese became more affluent and experienced consumers, the purchase decisions would become lower risk events. In this new environment, less information on performance and quality would be required and more emotional and symbolic advertising appeals would likely appear.

With reference to Rice and Lu's study, another study with the same objectives was launched in 1993. A sample of 324 television commercials were taped from four television channels in China, including CCTV and three local channels in Guang Dong Province (Chan, 1995). It was reported that more than half (58 per cent) of the sampled commercials contained at least one information cue and yielded an average of 0.9 cues per commercial. Chan accepted the analysis made by Rice and Lu and concluded that the Chinese consumers were more affluent in the nineties. With such a background, the Chinese consumers were beginning to look for intangible value of the product and services, which led to the increasing use of image-oriented television advertising.

IV. INFORMATION ANALYSIS OF CHINESE NEWSPAPERS

Definition:

In this study, information content of advertising was being defined as "the specific, relevant and verifiable facts about an advertised product that are used in creating a desire for such a product' (Marquez, 1977).

Research Objectives:

- To analyze and to identify the information content of Chinese newspaper advertisements from 1979 till 1998.
- To study product effect on advertising information in China
- To see whether there were changes on advertising information level over the study period.

Research Hypothesis:

Prior discussions suggested that Chinese consumers were more affluent in the nineties and were looking for the intangible value of products and services. This has led to the increasing use of image-oriented advertisements that are less informative than in the past.

Hypothesis : There was a decline in the advertising information levels in Chinese advertisements over the study period in China.

Sampling Frame and Method:

The sampling frame included all 1/5 page or above advertisements in the Renmin Ribao (Peoples Daily) from January 16, 1979 till June 16, 1998. Renmin Ribao was being found in 1948 and circulated in more than 30 cities in China including Beijing. It is a national newspaper with a circulation of around 2,330,000 copies per day and is catered for the general public (China Media Book, 1995). Renmin Ribao also possesses high authority in China and helps to clarify party and government policies.

Although the circulation of Renmin Riabo dropped drastically in the past few years, it was still appropriate to use it in this study because it remained to be one of the media earning the highest advertising revenue from 1979 till 1990. It remained within the top ten till 1994. This period coincided and covered most of the time frame of the study period. Systematic random sampling was being used in this study. Every Renmin Ribao published on the sixteenth of every month from 1979 till June 1998 was being studied. All duplicated advertisements were not included in order to eliminate the bias from frequency.

Execution:

Resnik and Stern's Information Classification System (14 information cues; refer to Appendix I) was employed to evaluate the informative aspect of the sampled advertisements.

Advertised products were divided into seven different categories, namely, industrial product, non-durable, durable, institutional/corporate advertisement, servicing/retailing, drug and miscellaneous. 30 per cent of the samples were used to check the internal reliability of the study and an 85 per cent minimum reliability level was specified.

A feasibility study had been conducted by the author: sixteenth of every alternative months in 1979, 1989 and 1998 were studied so as to test the plausibility of the study and to enable the author to be familiar with the coding system. A university student with competence in Chinese and with the ability to read simplified Chinese characters was also recruited as inter-coder to cross check the reliability of the study. She had been thoroughly briefed and trained on the concepts of the Resnick and Stern's Information Classification System. Then 15 per cent of the sampled advertisements were randomly selected to cross check its reliability and an 85 per cent reliability level was specified.

Data Analysis:

A total of 448 advertisements were analyzed and an inter-coder reliability of 87.6 per cent was achieved. The findings in Table 1 indicated that industrial product (33%) was the most significant product category in the Renmin Ribao, followed by durable (24.6%) and institutional/corporate advertisement (22.5%).

It was worth mentioning that the number of advertisements soared during the mid-eighties and maintained a steady growth at the turn of the decade. Industrial product was the dominate advertiser (79.6%) during 1979 through 1983 but its influence started to decline since then. Starting from 1984 till 1993 durable became one of the influential players and was replaced by institutional/corporate advertisements in the mid-nineties.

Table 1: Product Category

	1979-1983 (n=54)	1984-1988 (n=124)	1989-1993 (n=133)	1994-1998* (n=137)	Total (n=448)
Industrial Product	43 (79.6%)	54 (43.5%)	29 (21.8%)	22 (16.1%)	148 (33%)
Non-durable	4 (7.4%)	8 (6.5%)	8 (6%)	22 (16.1%)	42 (9.4%)
Durable	2 (3.7%)	31 (25%)	53 (39.8%)	24 (17.5%)	110 (24.6%)
Institutional/Corporate	0 (0%)	20 (16.1%)	29 (21.8%)	52 (38%)	101 (22.5%)
Servicing	4 (7.4%)	9 (7.3%)	3 (2.3%)	5 (3.6%)	21 (4.7%)
Drugs	0 (0)	2 (1.6%)	4 (3%)	1 (0.7%)	7 (1.6%)
Miscellaneous	1 (1.9%)	0 (0%)	7 (5.3%)	11 (8%)	19 (4.2%)

* 1998 samples included only from Jan. 16 to June 16, 1998

As indicated in Table 2, over 95 per cent of the sampled advertisements were informative and contained at least one information cue. Nearly 80 per cent of the advertisements contained two or more cues and around two per cent of them managed to contain five or more information cues. A total of 1,004 information cues were recorded in the 448 advertisements with an average of 2.24 cues per advertisement.

Table 2: Information Level of Renmin Riabo Advertisements

No. of Cues Per Ad	No. of Ads (n=448)	% of Sample
No Cue	20	4.5
At least 1 cue	428	95.5
At least 2 cues	358	79.9
At least 3 cues	158	35.3
At least 4 cues	48	10.7
5 cues or more	10	2.2

Total Number of Cues = 1,004; Mean = 2.24 cues per ad

Table 3 indicated the frequency of appearance of the fourteen information cues. It showed that "availability" of the product was the most frequent used cue, appearing in 87.7 per cent of the advertisements; followed by "components/content" and "performance", appearing in 45.5 and 44.2 per cent of the sampled advertisements respectively. The emphasis on "availability" and "components/content" was not surprising, as indicated earlier that the main purpose of advertising in China was to provide information.

Table 3: Frequency of Appearance of the 14 Cues

Information Cue	No. of Ads Containing Cue	% of Sample
Availability	393	87.7
Components/Content	204	45.5
Performance	198	44.2
Quality	118	26.3
Guarantees/warranties	65	14.5
Price or value	46	10.3
New Ideas	31	6.9
Special Offers	18	4.0
Company Research	11	2.5
Nutrition	8	1.8
Independent Research	5	1.1
Packaging or shape	4	0.9
Safety	2	0.4
Taste	0	0

As for information content by product category, Table 4 indicated that all drug and industrial products were considered informative with an average of 3.3 and 2.53 cues per advertisement respectively. Further, more than 97 per cent durable advertisements were also informative and yielded an average of 2.46 cues per advertisement. Servicing/retailing and institutional/corporate advertisements were least informative at only 1.76 and 1.8 cues per advertisement respectively.

Table 4: Information Content by Product Category

Product Category	Number of Ads (n=448)	Number of Informative Ads	% of Informative Ads	Average No. of Cues Per Ad
Industrial Product	148	148	100	2.53
Nondurable	42	40	95.2	1.98
Durable	110	107	97.3	2.46
Institutional/Corporate	101	89	88.1	1.8
Servicing/retailing	21	19	90.5	1.76
Drug	7	7	100	3.3
Miscellaneous	19	18	94.7	1.74

Chi-square values = 22.41 and p<0.01

In answering the research hypothesis on advertising information level overtime, the author recoded the time span of the study period on the basis of 10 years per span. The first span from 1979 to 1988 (Rice and Lu published their article in 1988) and the second span from 1989 to 1998 in order to test the hypothesis.

Table 5 indicated that there was a decrease in the percentage of informative advertisements, from 97.8 per cent (1979 – 1988) to 94 per cent (1989 – 1998). There were minor but contradicting variations for the changing information levels over time; the average number of cues per advertisement dropped from 2.28 to 2.21 but the average number of cues per informative advertisement rose from 2.33 to 2.35.

Table 5: Information Level by Time Span

	1979 – 1988 (n=178)	1989 – 1998* (n=270)
No Cue	4 (2.2%)	16 (5.9%)
One Cue	28 (15.7%)	42 (15.6%)
Two Cues	80 (45%)	120 (44.4%)
Three Cues	48 (27%)	62 (23%)
Four Cues or more	18 (10.1%)	30 (11.1%)
Total No. of Cues	406	598
Total No. of Informative Ad	174 (97.8%)	254 (94%)
Average No. of Cues Per Ad	2.28	2.21
Average No. of Cues Per Informative Ad	2.33	2.35

*1998 samples included only from Jan. 16 to June 16, 1998
Chi-square values = 4.037 and p lies between 0.90 and 0.10

As for the top five most frequent used information cues (Table 6), "availability" remained top of the list. "Components/content" and "performance" ranked second and third respectively during the first time span and then swapped in their level of significance in the latter part of the study period. Further, downward moves were reported by all top five most used cues except for "components/content" with nearly 10 per cent increment. Hence, the findings could not fully support the research hypothesis made previously.

Table 6: Top Five Most Frequent Used Cues by Time Span

	1979 – 1988	1989 - 1998
Availability	171 (96%)	222 (82.2%)
Components/Content	71 (39.9%)	133 (49.3%)
Performance	85 (47.8%)	113 (41.9%)
Quality	54 (30.3%)	64 (23.7%)
Guarantees/warranties	38 (21.3%)	27 (10%)

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Since Resnik and Stern introduced their classification system in 1977, about 60 available studies had used it to measure the information content of advertising in different countries. According to Abernethy and Frank (1996), an aggregate sample of more than 91,000 advertisements were being studied across 24 countries. By medium, more observations were done on magazine (56), television (44), newspaper (10), radio (6) and outdoor advertising (1).

Although the classification system was generally accepted as an objective means to measure the information content of advertising, the results obtained had varied markedly. In 1996, Abernethy and Frank gathered all these studies together and employed meta-analysis[3] to assess their significance. The authors identified the crucial elements in the past studies, such as the product effects, media effects, and country of origin and changing information levels over time and then examined them quantitatively in the meta-analysis.

The overall findings indicated that the mean number of cues was 2.04, more than 84 per cent of the advertisements had at least one cue, 58 per cent had two or more cues, and 33 per cent had three or more cues. The type of information most commonly presented was "performance" (43%), "availability" (37%), "components/contents" (33%) and "price" (25%).

The analysis also reported that developed and developing countries had relatively similar numbers of cues on average, 2.08 and 1.92, respectively. Developed countries had fewer advertisements containing at least one cue, 82 per cent versus 89 per cent.

[3]Meta-analysis is a useful tool for taking stock of a body of research. It provides a quantitative literature review that enables researchers to (1) develop norms from a wide variety of sources, (2) resolve disputes in the literature, (3) determine which factors have contributed to systematic differences across studies, and (4) identify areas that have been neglected and warrant further investigation (Abernethy and Frank, 1996).

Besides the meta-analysis which was used to help us to interpret the present findings, a comparison table on past studies on Chinese advertisements was also compiled (Table 7) so as to have a more comprehensive view and analysis on the issue. Despite the difference in methodology, medium and period of study, they all helped to portray a better picture on the information aspect of Chinese advertising.

Table 7: Comparison of Past Studies on Chinese Advertising Content

	Rice and Lu (1988)	**Chan (1995)**	**Kwok (this study)**
Year/Period	Summer of 1987	11-18 Dec., 1993	Jan. 1979 –Jun. 1998
Medium	Magazine	Television	Newspaper
No. of Samples	472	324	448
No. of Informative Ad	472 (100%)	189 (58.3%)	428 (95.5%)
Average No. of cues	2.26	0.9	2.24
Most commonly Presented cues	Availability Performance Quality	Performance Quality Components/content	Availability Components/Content Performance

Product Effects Studies

The meta-analysis results indicated that services and institutional advertising tended to contain the lowest amount of information. Advertisements for durable such as cars, furniture/home furnishings, appliances and electronics included the highest amount of information. Whereas, advertisements for nondurable such as food/ alcohol/tobacco, laundry and household goods, and personal care items presented considerably less information. Advertisements for durable contained an average of 2.7 cues per advertisement versus 2.0 cues for nondurable. More advertisements for durable than nondurable contained at least one cue (92% versus 76%).

Results of the present study echoed the analysis done by Abernethy and Frank (1996). Institutional/corporate and servicing/retailing advertisements contained the least information with 1.8 and 1.76 cues per ad only. On the other hand, findings on durable and nondurable also matched the analysis at 2.46 and 1.98 cues per advertisement respectively with the latter being less informative. Industrial product, which was considered as a durable but aimed at a different target audience also, had a relatively high mean at 2.53 cues per advertisement.

Although the product categories were not identical, similarities could still be identified across the three different studies on Chinese advertisements. Rice and Lu (1988) reported that the most informative advertisements by product were medicine and medical product (2.71), followed by consumer product (2.47) and industrial product (2.22). Cosmetics and fashion advertisements were the least informative advertisements at 1.83 cues per advertisement.

Instead reporting on the numbers of informational cues per advertisement by product, Chan (1995) presented the percentage of informative advertisements. The study reported that nondurable and drug commercials contained the highest percentage of informative commercials, both at 75 per cent. Whereas, servicing/retailing and cigarettes/liquor advertisements contained the lowest percentage of informative commercials (39 % and 16 %).

The results concluded that drugs or medicine advertisements were the most informative advertisements in China. On the contrary, servicing/retailing, institutional/corporate cosmetics/fashion and cigarettes/liquor were the least informative products.

Changing Information Levels Over Time

Longitudinal studies to scrutinize the changing information levels over time included Pollay's study on U.S. magazine (1984), Stern and Resnik's study on U.S. television (1991), Fay and Currier's study on New Zealand magazine (1994) and Moon and Frank's study on Korean magazine (1996).

The results of the above studies varied and there were significant differences: U.S. magazine advertisements showed information declining from 1900s through the 1970s (averaged 4.0 cues per ad in 1900s and dropped to 3.8 cues per ad in 1970s); on the other hand, the average number of cues per U.S. television commercials increased in the mid-eighties (averaged 0.67 cues per commercial in 1975 increased to 0.85 cues in 1986), Korean magazine advertisements maintained stable information level for international brands but declining level for domestic brands (averaged 1.92 and

1.43 cues per ad for domestic and international brands in 1985; averaged 1.45 and 1.36 cues per ad for domestic and international brands in 1994 respectively); and New Zealand magazine advertisements showed a gradual rise in information level from 1953 through 1983 with a sharp decline in 1988 (averaged 2.99 cues per ad in 1953 and rose to its height of 3.59 between 1978 and 1983 but with a sharp decline to 2.75 between 1988 and 1993).

As for the percentage of informative advertisements, Stern and Resnik (1991) reported that the proportion had not changed over time. The findings of Moon and Frank (1996) showed that the percentage of informative advertising increased from 80 per cent in 1985 to 83 per cent in 1994.

The results of the present study indicated that though the number of informative advertisements dropped, changes in the average number of cues per advertisement and the average number of cues per informative advertisement were quite minor. There was even a reported increase in the average number of cues per informative advertisement, from 2.33 to 2.35.

The results of the present study could not fully support the hypothesis that there was a changing of advertising information levels (a downward change) over the study period in China. Although the Chinese were becoming more affluent and experienced consumers over the past twenty years, the information level (average number of cues per advertisement/average number of cues per informative advertisement) and content remained quite stable and unchanged as a whole. The information on "availability", "performance" and "components/content" continued to play a significant part in Chinese advertising.

With limited available studies and conflicting results on changing information levels over time, it would be difficult and too risky to make any comparison or to come up with a definite conclusion on the time effect. Previous studies on changing information levels over time suggested that the correlation between economic advancement and advertising content needed further investigation. The present study was the first empirical research attempting to trace the change of information levels in Chinese newspaper over a period of 20 years and such a research could only serve as a basis for further in-depth studies on the issue.

Media Effects Studies

Although this research was not catered to study the media effects on the information level, we were able to acquire some understanding on the issue by cross analyzing the present findings with those in past studies.

According to Abernethy and Frank (1996), print media allowed almost unlimited message length and processing time; these were constrained in the broadcast media by fixed exposure duration. Consequently, print advertisements were able to carry more information than broadcast advertisements. Past studies indicated that there was a wide range in average information cues per advertisement reported for magazines (1.17 to 3.94 cues per ad), newspapers (1.59 to 3.27 cues per ad). As for broadcast media, the average cues per advertisement for television (0.46 to 3.64) and radio (1.57 to 2.66).

Results of the meta-analysis indicated that outdoor and television advertising contained the least amount of information (1.42 and 1.41 cues respectively), followed by radio (2.24). For print advertisements, the most information was found in newspaper (2.60 cues) and followed by magazine (2.38 cues). If we compared the results with past studies on Chinese advertisements, it was interesting to find that the number of cues per advertisement was generally lower in Chinese advertisements than those in other countries. Rice and Lu (1988) reported an average of 2.26 cues per advertisement for magazine; Chan (1995) reported an average of 0.9 cues per television commercial and this study showed an average of 2.24 cues per advertisement. The media effects on Chinese advertising information level were proved to be significant. These outcomes matched with the results of the meta-analysis with the highest amount of information found in print advertisements and the lowest amount of information in television commercials.

The meta-analysis also indicated that 84 per cent of all aggregate samples (more than 91,000 samples) were considered informative with at least one information cue. According to Rice and Lu (100%), Chan (58%) and results of this study (93.5%), the mean percentage of informative advertisement of the three studies on Chinese advertising was at 84.5 per cent.

Limitations

Keown et al (1988) commented and the author agreed that the Resnik and Stern's information classification system was not make for multiple bits of information contained in each cue. An example was a Chinese manufacturer advertised a number of industrial products that catered for different purposes within a single advertisement. However, under the system, this advertisement would be coded as providing only one performance information cue. On this account, additional research was essential in order to develop a more sophisticated and comprehensive methodology for measuring information content.

Abernethy and Frank (1996) advised that omitting small advertisements and duplicates (which was a common practice across similar studies) would in a way reduce the overall information levels of the study. This was not agreed by the author, as the study tended to measure the overall information level of advertisements and the common practice in the industry. If one of the advertisers managed to have a huge advertising budget and frequently placed its advertisement on the media and we took for granted to count its information cues everytime, then this single advertisement might have a chance to skew the whole set of data.

Small advertisements were also omitted in this study due to two factors. Most of the small advertisements were either notice or recruitment advertisement which were generally considered as classified advertisement and differed from product or retail advertisement by the advertising people. Secondly, as the author only managed to use a reduced version or microfilm of the Renmin Ribao which were of low quality and sometimes the small advertisements could not be read clearly. In order to avoid misinterpretations of unclear advertisements or copies, the author would rather to have a smaller sample in order to attain a relatively precise interpretation on the issue.

Finally, it was worth mentioning that there were a great variety of newspapers in China, which were of different natures, such as national newspapers, local newspapers and specialized newspapers. In the eighties, national newspapers were more influential and earning the biggest share of advertising revenue. However, the situation changed in the latter part of the nineties with local newspapers earning the biggest share of advertising revenue (Chan et al, 1997). Previous study also indicated that the amount of newspaper advertising information varied significantly by the category of newspaper, national or local (Abernethy, 1992). On this account, it was worthwhile to do a comparison study on Chinese national and local newspapers to track their changes or the difference on information level.

Conclusion and Implications

In studying the product effects and cross analyzing the media effects on advertisements in China, the results of this study managed to conclude that product nature and medium characteristics had a significant effect on the information level of advertisement. Nevertheless, it was unable to establish a concrete interpretation on the issue of changing information levels over time.

To conclude the study, it would be fair to adopt scholars' arguments on the issue. Engel et al (1995) and Laband (1986) stated that consumers tend to rely on information provided by advertisements in buying relatively high priced and infrequently purchased items. For frequently purchased items, consumers already have a large stock of information that had been collected through the repeated act of purchase and consumption. Also, inexpensive goods entail a very low cost to the consumer of making a purchase 'mistake' and buying something of unexpected low quality. Like consumers in other parts of the world, Chinese consumers need more detailed and comprehensive information in advertisements for durable goods and vice versa. Therefore, we would expect that Chinese advertisements of goods and services that are purchased infrequently and are comparatively high priced to contain the largest amount of information.

Besides the product nature, the life cycle of the product, the objectives of an advertisement would also affect the information content of an advertisement than the economic growth of a society alone. The difference between broadcast and print media was also crucial. All these factors should be considered in order to have a better picture on the information content of advertising within the same country of origin.

It is hope that this exercise will serve as a benchmark study to analyze the development of Chinese advertisements from a longitudinal aspect and will initiate further study on the issue. As the press industry in China has undergone a remarkable "reversal change" within the system itself with the growing popularity of the "mass press" and in contrast with the decline of the "party press" in the mid-nineties. It will therefore be essential to have a cross analysis on the two different presses in order to have a holistic picture of the issue.

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APPENDIX I

Information Cues: Criteria for Classification as Informative or Non-informative

1) Price-value

What does the product cost? What is its value-retention capability?
What is the need-satisfaction capability/dollars?

2) Quality

What are the product's characteristics that distinguish it from competing products based on an objective evaluation of workmanship, engineering, durability, excellence of materials, structural superiority, superiority of personnel, attention to detail or special services?

3) Performance

What does the product do, and how well does it do what it is designed to do in comparison to alternative purchases?

4) Components or contents

What is the product composed of? What ingredients does it contain?
What ancillary items are included with the product?

5) Availability

Where can the product be purchased?
When will the product be available for purchase?

6) Special Offers

What limited-time non-price deals are available with a particular purchase?

7) Taste

Is evidence presented that the taste of a particular product is perceived as superior in taste by a sample of potential customers?

8) Nutrition

Are specific data given concerning the nutritional content of a particular product, or is a direct specific comparison made with other products?

9) Packaging or shape

What package is the product available in which makes it more desirable than alternatives? What special shapes is the product available in?

10) Guarantees and warranties

What postpurchase assurances accompany the product?

11) Safety

What safety features are available on a particular product compared to alternative choices?

12) Independent research

Are results of research gathered by an "independent" research firm presented?

13) Company research

Are data gathered by a company to compare its product with a competitor's presented?

14) New Ideas

Is a totally new concept introduced during the commercial?
Are its advantages presented?

Source: Stern , Bruce L., Krugman, Dean M. and Resnik, Alan (1981). "Magazine Advertising: An Analysis of Its Information Content", Journal of Advertising Research, 14 (2), 39-44

Running Head: INFLUENCE OF POLITICAL CAMPAIGN ADVERTISING

Impact of Soft-Money-Sponsored Issue Advocacy Advertising versus Candidate-Sponsored Positive and Negative Advertising: Influences on Candidate Preferences and Democratic Processes

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Abstract

Spending on soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy advertising has grown dramatically in recent years and, in some campaigns, now approaches levels of candidate-sponsored advertising. However, the question of the influence of soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy advertising on the electorate or its indirect influence on democratic processes has received scant attention in political communication research. This investigation examined the influence of soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy advertising in House and Senate campaigns, comparing its effects with candidate-sponsored positive and negative advertising on candidate preferences and matters intrinsic to democratic processes. The pattern of results revealed no main effects for advertising approach on candidate preference. Instead, advertising approach exerted unique impacts based on viewer party affiliation. Candidate-sponsored negative advertising was influential primarily with Republican viewers, whereas soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy advertising was effective only with nonpartisans. The influence of advertising approach on democratic process was especially revealing. Viewer exposure to candidate-sponsored advertising, both positive and negative, elicited greater viewer awareness and interest in the campaigns and more knowledge of candidates, both in comparison to controls and to soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy advertising.

Keywords: political influence, political advertising, negative advertising, attack politics, issue advocacy advertising, campaign finance, soft-money

money-sponsored issue advocacy ads have been used as a way to circumvent campaign finance laws. While stopping just short of explicitly advocating the election or defeat of a candidate, "groups engaging in issue advocacy ran advertising campaigns lambasting a particular candidate with the clear and unambiguous intention of affecting the outcome of an election" (Dreyfuss, 1998, p. 32).

The role of soft money in election campaigns, especially its use for so-called issue advocacy ads, and its potential impact on the electoral system, is now a defining public policy issue which has sparked debate at the state and national level and is likely to be a serious topic of discussion in the 2000 presidential race (Cooper, 1998). The soft-money loophole in campaign finance laws produced a trickle of funds in the 1980s, which grew to floodgate proportions by the late 1990s. In 1996, Democratic and Republican parties received about $250-million in soft-money contributions (Dreyfuss, 1998). The reform group, Common Cause, estimates that soft-money contributions will approach $750-million in the 2000 election cycle (Drinkard, 1998).

A significant proportion of soft-money contributions during election years is spent on issue advocacy advertising, which bears a striking resemblance to candidate campaign commercials (Mayers, 1998). During 1996, major political parties and special interest groups spent more than $150-million on issue advocacy advertising (Brubaker, 1998), about $78-million by parties, and $72-million by various issue advocacy groups through their political action committees (PACs). The latter are particularly sinister since the campaigns often last longer than a typical election cycle, and a number of groups have established media plans that provide for a nearly continuous flow of funding for paid media advertising (Tedesco, 1998, p. 11).

By 1998, in many Senate and House campaigns, spending on issue advocacy advertising approached the levels spent for paid advertising by candidates themselves (Hurt, 1999; Mayers,

Impact of Soft-Money-Sponsored Issue Advocacy Advertising
versus Candidate-Sponsored Positive and Negative Advertising:
Influences on Candidate Preferences and Democratic Processes

The question about what to do about the influence of soft money in election campaigns has heated up following the aborted 1998 debate over campaign finance reform in the U.S. Senate. Soft money is defined as, "funds...used in Federal as well as state and local elections, for various grassroots and party building activities but...not subject to the contributions limitations of the Federal Election Campaign Act...and the Federal Election Commission (FEC) regulations" (Levine, 1997, p. 8). Of particular concern is use of soft money by national political parties and special interest groups for television advertising designed to influence voters in targeted elections (e.g., Borsuk, 1998; Knight, 1998). Heightened sensitivity to the use of soft money to sponsor television advertising stemmed from the recent scandal involving the Democratic National Committee's decision to fund an extensive television advertising campaign during 1995 and 1996 to support the reelection of Clinton-Gore (e.g., Suro, 1998) and from growing use of soft-money campaign advertising by both political parties and special interest groups in state and local election campaigns in 1996 and 1998 (Cassata, 1998; Dreyfuss, 1998).

Issue advocacy advertising focuses on issues or, as often the case in election campaigns, on candidates' positions on the issues. They are differentiated from express advocacy ads, which call for the election of a particular candidate, and are subject to campaign finance laws. Issue advocacy advertising enjoys the protection of the First Amendment and is not subject to standard campaign finance law restrictions concerning spending limits and disclosure as long as the ads "stop short of saying 'vote for' or 'vote against' the candidates mentioned" (Greenblatt, 1998, p. 354). However, "these ads can tread awfully close to the edge" (p. 354). In recent years, soft-

1999). Moreover, spending for issue advocacy advertising is projected to increase, barring new legislation that either restricts spending on these type of campaigns or seeks to create free air time for candidates (e.g., Magleby & Nelson, 1990). Don Simon, the general council at Common Cause, characterizes issue advocacy advertising as "the 800-pound gorilla of campaign finance... that threatens to overwhelm all regulation on money in politics because it provides an avenue for complete evasion of the rules" (in Dreyfuss, 1998, p. 31).

Several scholars have studied the role and/or influence of spending by national political organizations (Dwyre, 1996) and special interest groups (Gaddie, 1995) in election campaigns. Also, considerable attention has been paid to the influence of special interest group money on pending legislation (Podhorzer, 1995). In contrast, surprisingly little attention has been paid to the question of the direct influence of soft money on the electorate. Indeed, the influence of issue advocacy advertising has been nearly ignored by academics (Fox, 1986).

The limited research about the influence of issue advocacy advertising has dealt mainly with the issue of its direct effects on attitudes, particularly in corporate campaigns. Results of this research are mixed. Some studies suggest that the effects of issue advocacy campaigns have been exaggerated (Adkins, 1978; Astor, 1976; Crable & Vibert, 1982; Sethi, 1977), especially those in a political context (Brubaker, 1998), whereas other studies reveal that issue advocacy advertising campaigns exert a relatively strong impact on people's short-term recall (Cappella & Jamieson, 1997), protect people's attitudes against change (Burgoon, Pfau, & Birk, 1995), or alter people's attitudes (Cappella & Jamieson, 1997). Reid, Soley, and Vanden Bergh summarized knowledge about corporate advocacy advertising in 1981, observing that, "little is known about...actual effects" (p. 310) and, in the face of the growing use of issue advocacy advertising in political campaigns since 1996, even less is known today about the effects of issue advocacy advertising

on voter decision making. Only one previous study has addressed this question. Garramone (1985) compared candidate and PAC sponsorship of negative advertisements employed in a Montana U. S. Senate campaign on Michigan State undergraduate attitudes, finding that PAC sponsorship exerted greater influence against the targeted candidate with reduced backlash effects against the sponsor. However, no research has examined the effects of issue advocacy advertising on outcomes relevant to the health and viability of the democratic process.

The purpose of this investigation is to enrich the debate about campaign finance reform by assessing the relative impact of televised issue advocacy advertising in U.S. Senate and House campaigns as to their influence on viewers': attitudes toward candidates; awareness, knowledge, and interest in campaigns; and likelihood of voting in the election. The study featured actual television ads which were employed in three campaigns in the viewers' ADI, comparing the influence of candidate-sponsored positive and negative ads and soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy ads versus a nonviewing control condition, on behalf of opposing candidates in two House and one Senate campaign during the 1998 elections.

Hypotheses

Although the central question posed in this investigation concerns the influence of televised issue advocacy ads in House and Senate campaigns, this issue can't be addressed in a vacuum. Hence, this study compared soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy advertisements to traditional candidate-sponsored positive and negative advertisements, both with regard to their influence on viewer attitudes toward candidates and their effect on matters intrinsic to democratic processes, such as awareness, knowledge, interest, and participation. In all instances, the study sought to compare the impact of issue advocacy advertisements versus the influence of more traditional candidate-sponsored advertising. This investigation assumed that issue advocacy advertising functions much like candidate-sponsored negative ads, despite the fact that issue advocacy ads don't explicitly call for the election or defeat of specific candidates.

Candidate Preference

We start by comparing the influence of candidate-sponsored positive and negative advertisements. The study conceptualizes negative advertisements, sometimes called attack ads, as making "strategic use of...anti-rival statements...to weaken support for ...the targeted rival" (Haynes & Rhine, 1998, p. 693). Negative ads concentrate mainly on the opponent, rendering a comparative judgment toward the end of the message (Pfau & Kenski, 1990, p. 2). They stand in stark contrast to positive ads, which promote the positive attributes of the sponsoring candidate, ignoring the opponent altogether, and they differ from comparative ads, which simply compare the records or positions of two candidates to the advantage of the sponsoring candidate (Salmore & Salmore, 1985). Issue advocacy advertisements employed during election campaigns resemble candidate-sponsored negative ads. They focus exclusively on one candidate, typically attacking the candidate's position on a specific issue and, in the process, "painting a dark...picture of the candidate based on that one position" (Greenblatt, 1998, p. 354). They stop short of urging a vote against a candidate, but after "lambasting a particular candidate," issue advocacy advertisements communicate an implicit, but nonetheless, "clear and unambiguous" message, that viewers ought to vote against the targeted candidate (Dreyfuss, 1998, p. 32; Preston, 1999).

Candidate-sponsored negative ads are thought to be more persuasive than positive ads. First, negative ads are influential because they are more likely to be noticed and processed. This position is explained by the theoretical construct of negativity, with its origins in the information processing literature. It maintains that negative information stands out and, therefore, is much more likely to be noticed and processed (Anderson, 1974; Fiske, 1980; Hamilton & Huffman,

1971; Hodges, 1974; Jordan, 1965; Levin & Schmidt, 1969; Miller & Rowe, 1967; Warr & Jackson, 1976; Wyer, 1970). As Fiske (1980) notes, "negative cues stand out [and are more informative] by virtue of being rare" (p. 904). Kellermann's (1984) synthesis of the negativity literature provides support for the negativity construct. She concludes that negative information "is weighted more heavily than positive information in the initial formation of impressions, [and it] exhibits a greater capacity to alter existing impressions" (pp. 37-38).

In the context of advertising, studies reveal that negative messages provide superior recall, which is true for political advertisements (Shapiro & Rieger, 1989), public service campaign messages (Reeves, Newhagen, Maibach, Basil, & Kurtz, 1989), and commercial ads (Lang, 1989; Lang & Friestad, 1987; Reeves et al., 1989; Thorson & Friestad, 1985). Because negative information is noticed, processed deeply, and remembered, it exerts more impact in political impression. Kernall (1977) finds that, "negative opinions exert disproportionate influence in political behavior" (p. 51), and Lau's (1982, 1985) research reveals that negative information about candidates exerts more influence, both in initial formation and maintenance of impressions about political candidates, because it "stands out against a general positive background" (1982, p. 366).

However, even though negative political ads command greater attention and are processed more deeply, people say they dislike them, and some academic research suggests that they can boomerang against sponsors (Basil, Schooler, & Reeves, 1991; Garramone, 1984, 1985; Garramone, Atkin, Pinkleton, & Cole, 1990; Merritt, 1984; Roddy & Garramone, 1988; Shapiro & Rieger, 1989, 1992; Stewart, 1975; Swinyard, 1981). The issue of whether negative political advertisements trigger voter backlash has been a point of contention in the academic literature. A number of studies failed to detect a boomerang effect (Copeland & Johnson-Cartee, 1990;

characterize candidate credibility as "a separate dimension of advertising content" (p. 111), maintaining that it plays an important role in determining the persuasiveness of candidate advertising.

While there is little dispute that people dislike negative political ads, the overwhelming preponderance of evidence from practitioners and academics indicates that they work most of the time, in spite of the public's stated distaste for this approach (Ansolabehere & Iyengar, 1995; Armstrong, 1988; Axelrod, 1988; Barrett, 1988; Colford, 1988; Ehrenhalt, 1985; Guskind & Hagstrom, 1988; Hickey, 1986; Johnson-Cartee & Copeland, 1989, 1991; Kaid & Boydston, 1987; Kern, 1989; Kern & Just, 1995; Lang, 1991; Louden, 1987; Mann & Ornstein, 1983; Martinez & DeLegal, 1988; Moyers, 1984; Newhagen & Reeves, 1991; Nugent, 1987; Pfau & Burgoon, 1989; Pfau & Kenski, 1990; Pinkleton, 1998; Sabato, 1981, 1983; Schneider, 1988; Surlin & Gordon, 1977; Tarrance, 1980; Taylor, 1986; Tinkham & Weaver-Lariscy, 1993). Findings by Ansolabehere and Iyengar (1995), based on the results of a series of experiments conducted in California, indicate that, "small doses of [negative] campaign advertising are sufficient to influence voters' preferences" (p. 13).

The increasing use of televised negative ads in contemporary campaigns casts doubt on the position that they often backfire on sponsors. Johnson-Cartee and Copeland (1997) observe that, "Since the early 1980s, negative advertising has become the dominant strategy for most campaigns for high-visibility offices in the United States" (p. 21). Clearly, political practitioners aren't fools, and Newhagen and Reeves (1991) observe that, "If negative advertising does not work, its increasing use across the American political landscape would be difficult to explain" (p. 197). Indeed, today's practitioners "have discovered [that] it almost always pays to attack the opponent on television" (Taylor, 1986).

Johnson-Cartee & Copeland, 1991; Kaid & Boydston, 1987; Newhagen & Reeves, 1991; Pfau & Burgoon, 1989; Pinkleton, 1998; Weigold, 1992).

One explanation for the contradictory backlash findings is based on expectancy theory. Expectancy theory (Burgoon & Miller, 1985) posits that positive source credibility ratings function as a precondition for the use of intense and opinionated messages (Burgoon & Chase, 1973; Burgoon & Miller, 1985; Miller & Lobe, 1967). Whereas more credible sources can employ either positive or negative appeals, less credible sources are restricted to positive appeals. When less credible sources employ harsh and strident appeals, they usually trigger a negative violation of expectations, resulting in backlash (Burgoon & Miller, 1985).

This is particularly relevant for studies finding a backlash response to negative political ads since, in most instances, the manipulations used in these studies featured relatively unknown candidates, who lacked a base of initial credibility. For example, Basil, Schooler, and Reeves (1991) administered attack ads in behalf of candidates in North Dakota and Louisiana Senate campaigns to residents of Palo Alto, California; Garramone (1985) administered attacks on behalf of Montana Senate candidates to Michigan State University undergraduate students; the Stewart (1975), Roddy and Garramone (1988), Garramone et al. (1990), and Shapiro and Rieger (1992) studies employed fictitious candidates and messages; and Merritt (1984) examined candidate attack messages in a low visibility California State Assembly campaign. When a completely unknown source attacks an opponent, it would be anticipated that, absent any other information, people would think less of the source. In short, the problem with studies finding a boomerang effect is a fundamental question of validity. In most "real" campaigns for the House, Senate, or the Presidency, the candidates are known entities, and attack ads are processed by viewers using established schemas of both source and target. Ansolabehere and Iyengar (1996)

The second explanation for the influence of negative ads, even in the face of voter disdain, is the theoretical construct of differential decay. Differential decay is a slightly different take on disassociation, which was the focus of attention in early persuasion research (Hovland, Janis, & Kelley, 1953). While disassociation postulates the separation of new information from its origins in time, differential decay posits that, discounting cues, such as message source, tend to deteriorate more rapidly than message cues (Pfau, Parrott, & Lindquist, 1992). Whereas research failed to confirm disassociation, it has supported the construct of differential decay (Kaid & Sanders, 1978; Moore & Hutchinson, 1985; Newhagen & Reeves, 1991; Pratkanis & Greenwald, 1985). Newhagen and Reeves explain: "'Liking' may be forgotten while information is not," making negative political ads an on-balance "good bet" (p. 215). Practitioners clearly support this view. Melman (in Guskind & Hagstrom, 1988) observes: "When we ask people about negative ads they'll say they don't like them..., [however] the point is that they absorb the information" (p. 2787). Mullins (cited in Devlin, 1989) adds: "Everybody hates negative ads; then they rate them most effective in terms of decisionmaking. There isn't any long-term effect" (p. 407).

The argument is not that candidate-sponsored positive ads aren't effective. The available research suggests that positive political advertising often provides useful information about candidates, thus enabling ads to overcome partisan selectivity (Chaffee & McLeod, 1973), and that it exerts sizable influence on general election voters (Ansolabehere & Iyengar, 1995; Atkin, Bowen, Nayman, & Sheinkopf, 1973; Atkin & Heald, 1976; Hofstetter & Buss, 1980; Joslyn, 1981; Patterson & McClure, 1976). Rather, the argument is that, because candidate-sponsored negative ads are more likely to be noticed and processed, and because they are insulated from

backlash effects due to differential decay, they are even more effective than positive ads. Thus, it is predicted:

H1: Candidate-sponsored negative political advertisements exert greater influence on attitudes about candidates than candidate-sponsored positive advertisements.

This investigation posits that issue advocacy advertisements employed during election campaigns resemble candidate-sponsored negative ads (Dreyfuss, 1998; Greenblatt, 1998; Mayers, 1998) and, therefore, also exert greater influence on attitudes than candidate-sponsored positive ads. Because issue advocacy ads use an attack approach, they should also be noticed and processed more deeply than candidate-sponsored positive advertisements.

In addition, differential decay is rendered moot. Advocacy ads are not sponsored by candidates. Hence, even if viewers find an advocacy ad distasteful, there are no consequences for candidates who are implicitly supported. This is the most insidious feature of advocacy ads employed in political campaigns. The claims made may be false or misleading, but since neither candidate sponsored the message, viewers can't hold candidates accountable. This rationale is supported by the results of the only study comparing candidate-sponsored and PAC-sponsored negative ads, which found that independent sponsorship militated backlash effects (Garramone, 1985).

Furthermore, the target of an advocacy ad is left completely defenseless. Clearly, "the best available defense" against false or misleading claims in candidate-sponsored negative advertising is "the vigilance of the opposing candidate and party" (Jamieson, 1988, p. C2), coupled with close scrutiny of the news media. Targeted candidates can call attention to the inappropriate nature of the opponent's message, offering direct rebuttal to the ad's claims. Further, the news media, through adwatches, can provide refutation of unwarranted claims. In these ways, abuses in candidate-sponsored negative advertising are somewhat self-correcting, since unfair attacks can be turned against sponsors (Franzen, 1995). However, these policing mechanisms, though limited in their effectiveness (Pfau & Kenski, 1990), are not available with advocacy ads. Candidates or the news media can refute the claims advanced in an advocacy ad, but there is no political cost to sponsors. Indeed, even if the targeted candidate is completely successful in rebutting the ad's claims, the candidate is been forced to expend considerable energy and resources "to talk about things they don't want to talk about" (Greenblatt, 1998, p. 355) at absolutely no cost to the opposing candidate, who simply denies responsibility for the offending ad.

This study predicts that soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy advertisements are more effective than either candidate-sponsored positive or negative ads, and posits a research question dealing with viewer awareness of the sponsorship of issue advocacy ads.

H2: Soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy advertisements in political campaigns exert greater influence on attitudes about candidates than either candidate-sponsored positive or negative ads.

RQ1: To what degree are viewers aware of the sponsorship of issue advocacy advertisements aired during political campaigns?

Ever since Campbell, Gurin, and Miller (1954) and Campbell, Converse, and Stokes (1960) posited the psychological theory of voting behavior in two studies in the 1950s, political scientists have stressed the importance of political party cues in political cognition. Although research indicates a weakening of political party cues in voting in recent decades (Abramson, 1983; Axelrod, 1972, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986; Beck, 1988; Mann & Wolfinger, 1984; Norpoth, 1987; Petrocik, 1980, 1987; Stanley, Bianco, & Niemi, 1986; Wattenberg, 1986), manifested by

growth in nonaffiliated ranks and increasing crossover voting, partisan cues continue to be a reliable predictor of voting disposition (Abramson, 1983; Abramson, Aldrich, & Rohde, 1983; Kenski & Lockwood, 1988; Keith, 1992; Marcus & Converse, 1984; Stanga & Sheffield, 1987; Shively, 1980; Whiteley, 1988).

Partisans are more inclined toward selective perception of campaign communication and, as a result, are less susceptible to political influence in all circumstances (Atkin, 1971; Blumler & McQuail, 1969; Chaffee & Choe, 1980; Donahue, 1973; King, 1977; Sherrod, 1971; Shively, 1980; Swinyard & Coney, 1978; Weisberg & Rusk, 1970). However, even strong partisans can be swayed by political advertising. Ansolabehere and Iyengar's (1995) field experiments revealed that exposure to even a single campaign spot positively affected sponsors, producing a 14-point boost among viewers of the same party as the sponsor, a 5-point gain for viewers of the opposite party as the sponsor, and a 3-point shift in nonpartisan viewers. Their research also revealed differences in the way that Democratic and Republican partisans and nonpartisans responded to negative ads. Their results indicated that while "independents and Republicans are very receptive to attacks, ...Democrats tend to prefer positive messages" (1995, p. 92). In addition, Garramone (1985) reported that nonpartisans were more susceptible than Republican identifiers to the influence of candidate-sponsored negative ads. This study posits an interaction of advertising approach and political party identification such that:

H3: The advantage of candidate-sponsored negative and soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy advertisements over positive ads is most pronounced among Republican and nonpartisan viewers as compared to Democratic viewers.

Democratic Process

Finally, this investigation examines potential influences of candidate-sponsored positive and negative ads and issue advocacy ads on matters intrinsic to the democratic process, including people's awareness of, interest in, and knowledge of campaigns and candidates, and likelihood of voting. Television spot advertising has become the principle communication vehicle in more visible contemporary political campaigns (Kamber, 1997; Kern, 1989; Pfau & Kenski, 1990). Owen (1991) terms television spot advertising as "integral" to political campaigns (p. 25); Ansolabehere and Iyengar (1995) characterize it as "the essential tool in the battle for public opinion" (p. 3). The critical issue addressed in this section concerns potential consequences to democratic processes of candidate-sponsored positive and negative advertising and soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy advertising. Campaign practices "matter to the practice of democracy" (Geer & Lau, 1998, p. 1), not just because they impact electoral choice that "affects the course of government" (p. 1), but also because they leave an indelible imprint, for the better or worse, on the process of democracy.

Traditional candidate-sponsored advertising, both positive and negative, contributes to people's awareness and knowledge of candidates and issues. First generation research on the effects of campaign advertising revealed that exposure to advertisements is positively associated with learning about the candidates and their positions on the issues (Atkin, 1973; Atkin & Heald, 1976; Garramone, 1983, 1984; Hofstetter, Zukin, & Bus, 1978; Kaid & Sanders, 1978; Patterson & McClure, 1974, 1976).

Subsequent research compared positive and negative message approaches. Most studies revealed that negative political ads are superior in fostering recall of message content (Bowen, 1994; Finkel & Geer, 1998; Garramone et al., 1990; Shapiro & Rieger, 1989), especially

affective content (Lang, 1991; Lang & Lanfear, 1990). However, Ansolabehere and Iyengar indicated that exposure to a single political ad increased learning about issues by 5%, with positive and negative ads producing comparable information gains. Studies also reveal that negative advertisements are more involving than positive ads (Garramone et al., 1990; Pinkleton, 1998), and that "involvement motivates information seeking and knowledge gain" (Atkin, 1973; Chaffee & McLeod, 1973; Pinkleton, 1998, p. 34).

Although no studies have examined the impact of soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy advertisements on viewer awareness or knowledge, it is assumed that, like candidate-sponsored positive and negative ads, they should foster awareness and knowledge but, since they resemble candidate-sponsored negative ads in using an attack approach, they should prove superior to positive ads in enhancing awareness and knowledge. This study predicts:

> H4: Compared to candidate-sponsored positive ads, both candidate-sponsored negative advertisements and soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy ads are perceived by viewers as fostering greater awareness of campaigns and knowledge of the candidates.

The issue of the influence of candidate-sponsored positive and negative advertising on voter interest and participation has been a point of contention among scholars. As noted previously, voters express unequivocal disdain for negative political ads (Garramone, 1984; Johnson-Cartee & Copeland, 1989, 1991; Merritt, 1984; Steward, 1975; Surlin & Gordon, 1977). The still unresolved question is whether people's attitudes toward negative ads result in reduced interest and participation in politics.

Ansolabehere and Iyengar (1995) launched the first salvo in this renewed debate. The combined results of 1992 national election data and California experimental data indicated that negative advertising reduces turnout about 4.5%. However, the effect on turnout was the most pronounced among nonpartisans. Exposure to one negative advertisement reduced the intention to vote among Democrats and Republicans by 3% each, but it slashed intention to vote among nonpartisans by 11%. Ansolabehere and Iyengar conclude: "In the long run, negative campaigns contribute to the general antipathy toward politicians and parties and the high rates of disapproval and distrust of political institutions" (1995, p. 112).

Other research supports the position that negative political ads suppress voting turnout. Copeland and Johnson-Cartee (1990) reported an inverse relationship between acceptance of negative appeals and participation among southeastern U. S. voters. Other studies featuring 1990 National Election Study (NES) Senate campaign data also indicate that negative campaigning reduces turnout. Kahn and Kenney (1998) reported that, in those campaigns characterized as "harsh and uncivil," turnout falls, especially on the part of non-partisans" (p. 27), and Ragsdale and Rusk's (1995) probit analysis revealed that voter interest and knowledge enhanced turnout, but that negative campaign messages, in some instances, dampened turnout. Kern and Just (1995) characterize the relationship between the growth of negative campaigns and declining turnout as circular. They reason that, "Negative ads are believed because politicians are distrusted, and politicians are increasingly distrusted by people who believe negative ads." As a result, "people want to withdraw altogether from the political process" (p. 142).

However, other research disputes this position. Two early studies indicated that negative messages do not affect turnout. Cover (1986) found no effect on turnout, and Garramone and colleagues (1990) reported no effect on either attention to the campaign or intention to vote. Two recent longitudinal analyses concur. Finkel and Geer (1998) challenged the position advanced by Ansolabehere and Iyengar. They argue that negative campaigns can stimulate turnout among

some groups, enhancing knowledge of the campaign, increasing involvement, and strengthening partisan ties. Their study of presidential campaign advertising from 1960 to 1992 concluded that attack advertising doesn't impact turnout overall or among independents. In addition, Geer and Lau's (1998) examination of aggregate data in presidential elections, coupled with quadrennial NES surveys, during the period of 1960 to 1996 found overall quantity of campaign advertising, and the amount of negative advertising in particular, were both associated with greater turnout. They conclude: "In both sets of data and across nearly all campaign strategies, the results suggest that attack ads, if anything, stimulate turnout" (1998, p. 14). Finally, a recent meta-analysis by Lau, Sigelman, Heldman, and Babbitt (in press) found that, with those studies which met their criteria for inclusion, positive and negative effects of negative advertising on voter participation canceled each other out. They concluded: "...we uncovered little evidence to warrant the fears of those who believe that electoral participation is imperiled by the increasingly widespread use of negative political advertisements" (p. 14).

Despite the conflicting findings, this investigation tests the position of Ansolabehere and Iyengar that candidate-sponsored negative advertising suppresses interest in campaigns and voting intention, and the position initially posited, but not supported, by Garramone (1985) that soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy ads dampen interest and voting intention. Thus, it is predicted that:

> H5: Compared to candidate-sponsored positive ads, both candidate-sponsored negative advertisements and soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy ads are perceived by viewers as dampening interest in campaigns and suppressing likelihood of voting.

Method

This investigation compared the impact of televised issue advocacy advertisements and candidate-sponsored positive and negative ads on viewers' attitudes about candidates; awareness, knowledge, and interest in campaigns; and likelihood of voting in the election. The investigation was conducted during the final week of the 1998 election campaign. It featured Democratic and Republican candidates in two House campaigns and one Senate campaign. The study featured actual television advertisements employed in three campaigns in the viewers' ADI.

Participants

Participants were 311 prospective voters who were students in introductory journalism and communication courses at a large Midwestern university. They were told they were taking part in a study about television viewing.

Design and Independent Variables

The investigation employed a 4 (experimental condition) by 3 (political party affiliation) factorial design. The participants were assigned to one of 11 viewing conditions. In groups that ranged in size from 26 to 48, participants viewed one hour of television. Participants viewed two programs, "Home Improvement" and "Wheel of Fortune," station breaks on the hour and half hour, plus a total of 28 advertisements (eight ads each at the outset of the hour and at the half hour; and four ads each at the quarter hour, three-quarter hour, and at the end of the hour). Those participants assigned to treatment conditions viewed 12 political ads (four each at the outset of the hour; and two each at the quarter hour and three-quarter hour) and 16 commercial ads, whereas those asigned as controls viewed 28 commercial ads. All commercial and political ads were 30-seconds in length. Political ads were selected from the pool of candidate-sponsored and

soft-money-sponsored political ads that aired on NBC affiliate, WKOW, during the 1998 general election campaign.

Experimental condition was operationalized in the study as: candidate-sponsored positive, candidate-sponsored negative, soft-money-sponsored negative, and control (no political ads). All of the candidate-sponsored positive ads featured reasons to support the candidate, making no reference to the opponent. By contrast, all candidate-sponsored negative ads contained what Haynes and Rhine (1998, p. 693) term "anti-rival statements." The negative as focused mainly on the opponent, attacking their qualifications or issue positions, while rendering a comparative judgment toward the end of the message (Pfau & Kenski, 1990). All soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy ads focused exclusively on one candidate, attacking that candidate's position on a specific issue. Although they stopped short of urging viewers to vote against the candidate, the issue advocacy ads used in the study communicated an implicit, but "clear and unambiguous" message, that viewers should vote against the targeted candidate (Dreyfuss, 1998, p. 32). Issue advocacy ads were either sponsored by one of the two political parties or by PACs. As indicated previously, those participants assigned as controls viewed one-hour of television, but were not exposed to any political advertising.

Political party affiliation was operationalized in terms of participants' self-reported identification with the Democratic or Republican parties, or as unaffiliated with either of the two major political parties.

Procedures

The study was conducted in two phases. During Phase 1, the participants completed a questionnaire designed to provide basic demographic information and assess political party affiliation. Following Phase 1, researchers analyzed the preliminary data and, based on the

Dependent Measures

All multiple item scales employed in the investigation were evaluated for their internal consistency using Cronbach's (1951) coefficient alpha. Description, justification, and reliabilities for instruments are included below.

Participants' attitudes toward the candidates was assessed using three measures. Global attitude toward each candidate was measured using six bi-polar adjective pairs that were developed by Burgoon, Cohen, Miller, and Montgomery (1978). These attitude scales have attained excellent reliabilities in past political communication research. The adjective opposite pairs included: unacceptable/acceptable, foolish/wise, and negative/positive, wrong/right, unfavorable/favorable, and bad/good. The alpha reliability of the attitude scale was .87.

Perceptions of the competence and character of candidates was assessed using bi-polar adjective opposite scales developed in prior factor analytic research by McCroskey and colleagues (McCroskey, Holdridge, & Toomb, 1974; McCroskey & Jenson, 1973). The scales have been used extensively in past research (Rubin, Palmgreen, & Sypher, 1994), including studies of perceptions of political candidates (e.g., Pfau & Burgoon, 1988; Pfau et al., 1993, 1995,1997). Items used to assess perceptions of competence were unintelligent/intelligent, incompetent/competent, and unqualified/qualified; and for character were dishonest/honest, bad/good, and selfish/unselfish. The alpha reliabilities of the two measures were .90 and .79, respectively.

A number of items were designed to assess criteria relevant to democratic processes. These included measures of participants' awareness and interest in the campaigns, knowledge of candidates, and likelihood of voting in the election.

results, assigned participants to conditions. Participants were assigned to one of 11 viewing sessions. Each of the viewing sessions reflected comparable ratios of Democratic, Republican, and nonaffiliated viewers.

Once subjects were assigned to viewing sessions, sessions were randomly assigned to experimental conditions. Two of the 11 conditions involved controls. Of the nine treatment conditions, three featured only Democratic candidates, three included only Republican candidates, and three featured ads on behalf of both Democratic and Republican candidates. The separate and combined candidate conditions were designed to also test the effects of competitive clutter. However, subsequent results indicated no differences between the separate and combined conditions. Thus, for analyses reported in this paper, viewing conditions were collapsed so as to produce three groups of participants, who viewed candidate-sponsored positive ads, candidate-sponsored negative ads, or soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy ads.

Phase 2 commenced one week following Phase 1 and continued for four days. One of the two control sessions was scheduled for the first day of the study and the other for the last session of the last day of the study in order to detect any potential confounds resulting from campaign events once the study commenced. Results of a one-way MANOVA featuring the two control groups indicated no significant differences involving dependent variables, therefore ruling out contamination.

During Phase 2, participants reported at assigned times to the viewing room to watch one hour of television. Following the viewing, participants completed a questionnaire which assessed their attitudes toward each of the candidates in the three races; awareness and interest in the campaigns; knowledge of the candidates; likelihood of voting in the election; and awareness of the sponsors of the ads they had viewed.

Awareness, knowledge, and interest in the campaigns were assessed using bi-polar adjective opposite scales developed in past research by Fiske, Lau, and Smith (1990) and Price and Zaller (1993). Items included: How much awareness do you have of the (candidates' names) campaign for the (specific office) from (name of state)? How interested are you in (candidates' names) campaign for the (office) from (state)? How knowledgeable are you about the candidates in the (candidates' names) campaign for the (office) from (state)? While operationalizations of awareness and knowledge, in particular, often feature objective measures, more recent studies using subjective measures suggests that "self-report" items can provide valid and meaningful indicators (Mondak, 1996). The awareness, interest, and knowledge items were summed across campaigns. Reliabilities were: awareness, .84; interest, .84; and knowledge, .81.

Likelihood of voting in the election was assessed using a single-item 0-100 scale based on the question: On a scale from 0 to 100, where 0 represents "no probability" and 100 indicates "certain probability," what is the likelihood you will go to the polls and vote on November 3?

Finally, two measures sought to assess viewers perceptions of the ads viewed. Awareness of the sponsorship of the ads was assessed using an open-ended measure for each candidate worded as follows: Who is the sponsor of the political ads you've seen which either explicitly or implicitly support (candidate's name)? Individual participants saw ads sponsored by candidates' campaigns, sponsored by third parties, or viewed no political ads. Researchers coded responses as either correct or incorrect.

Results

Statistical Analyses

A 4 (candidate-sponsored positive ads, candidate-sponsored negative ads, soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy ads, control) by 3 (Democratic, Republican, or unaffiliated political

party identification) factorial multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was computed on all dependent variables as the first step in assessing the predictions and research questions. All significant omnibus effects were followed by univariate tests and, if significant, by assessment of the pattern of means using Scheffe post hoc tests.

Omnibus Results

The omnibus MANOVA revealed main effects for experimental condition, $F(21, 794) = 1.95$, $p < .01$, $eta^2 = .06$, political party affiliation, $F(14, 552) = 1.70$, $p < .05$, $eta^2 = .05$, as well as an interaction involving experimental condition and political party affiliation, $F(42, 1298) = 1.40$, $p < .05$, $eta^2 = .04$. Univariate tests involving the interaction revealed effects for all of the candidate preference measures--attitude, $F(6, 282) = 2.63$, $p < .05$, $eta^2 = .05$; competence, $F(6, 282) = 2.53$, $p < .05$, $eta^2 = .05$; and character, $F(6, 282) = 2.68$, $p < .05$, $eta^2 = .06$--but not for any of the democratic process measures. These interaction effects will be examined shortly. In contrast to the interaction findings, the subsequent univariate tests for the main effect finding for experimental condition were significant on the democratic process measures of awareness, $F(3, 282) = 2.86$, $p < .05$, $eta^2 = .03$, interest, $F(3, 282) = 2.68$, $p < .05$, $eta^2 = .03$, and knowledge $F(3, 282) = 4.79$, $p < .01$, $eta^2 = .05$. Univariate tests for the main effect finding of party affiliation were significant only on the democratic process measure of likelihood of voting, $F(2, 282) = 2.94$, $p < .05$, $eta^2 = .02$. The main effect findings for democratic processes will be examined following the section on candidate preference.

Candidate Preference

Hypothesis 1 predicted that candidate-sponsored negative ads exert greater influence on viewers' attitudes about candidates than candidate-sponsored positive ads, while Hypothesis 2 posited that soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy ads exert more influence than either candidate-sponsored positive or negative ads. Because the results revealed no main effects for experimental condition on any candidate preference measures, these predictions were not supported.

Research Question 1 asked, to what degree are viewers aware of the sponsorship of issue advocacy advertisements aired during political campaigns. The responses to the open-ended questions regarding sponsorship suggest considerable lack of awareness. Of the 91 participants who viewed issue advocacy ads, 29% correctly attributed their sponsorship, 21% incorrectly attributed them as candidate-sponsored, and 50% indicated that they didn't know who the sponsor was. In addition, 12% of 155 participants who viewed candidate-sponsored positive or negative ads attributed them to soft-money sponsors, in nearly all cases, to political parties. It appears that there is limited awareness of the sponsorship of soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy ads and, among those who make attributions, there is confusion about sponsorship, particularly the tendency to attribute sponsorship of issue advocacy ads to candidates.

Hypothesis 3 posited an interaction involving experimental condition and political party affiliation such that the advantage of candidate-sponsored negative and soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy ads over candidate-sponsored positive ads would be most pronounced among Republican and nonpartisan viewers. The results provided qualified support for this prediction.

The significant univariate results on participants' overall attitude toward, and their perception of competence and character of, sponsor candidates were followed up with post-hoc analyses. As Table 1 reveals, none of the advertising approaches exerted significant influence on Democratic viewers. Republican viewers, by contrast, were significantly influenced by candidate-sponsored negative advertisements. Compared to controls, Republican viewers manifested more positive overall attitudes toward sponsors ($t = 2.18$, $p < .05$), and more positive perceptions of the competence ($t = 1.88$, $p < .05$) and character ($t = 1.91$, $p < .05$) of negative advertising sponsors.

Republicans were unaffected by soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy ads. The only influence of positive advertisements on Republican identifiers was to enhance their perception of the character of sponsors ($t = 2.00$, $p < .05$). Despite overall effectiveness of candidate-sponsored negative ads among Republicans, direct tests of candidate-sponsored negative and positive ads across dependent variables revealed no significant differences.

The pattern of results among unaffiliated viewers was quite different. The candidate-sponsored positive ads exerted an influence only on perceptions of character ($t = 2.82$, $p < .01$), whereas candidate-sponsored negative ads only influenced overall attitude toward sponsors ($t = -1.82$, $p < .05$), producing a backlash effect against sponsors. This was the only evidence of backlash in the entire study.

Soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy ads, however, positively affected all dependent measures with unaffiliated viewers. They promoted more positive overall attitudes toward those candidates who were implicitly supported in the ads ($t = 2.00$, $p < .05$) and elicited more positive perceptions of those candidates' competence ($t = 3.44$, $p < .01$) and character ($t = 3.09$, $p < .01$). In addition, in direct comparison with positive ads, among nonaffiliated viewers the soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy ads elicited more positive viewer perceptions of competence on behalf of those candidates implicitly supported in the ads ($t = 2.44$, $p < .05$).

The pattern of the results offers support for the hypothesis that candidate-sponsored negative and soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy advertisements exert more influence on Republican and nonpartisan viewers, respectively. In addition, the results provide further nuance, indicating that candidate-sponsored negative ads are uniquely effective among Republicans, but elicit a modest backlash with nonpartisans, while soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy ads are exclusively influential with unaffiliated viewers.

Democratic Processes

Hypothesis 4 posited that, compared to positive ads, both candidate-sponsored negative ads and soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy advertisements are perceived by viewers as fostering greater awareness of the campaigns and knowledge of candidates. This prediction was not supported. As Table 2 illustrates, the results revealed that candidate-sponsored ads, both positive and negative, promote both awareness and knowledge. In comparison to controls, candidate-sponsored positive ($t = 3.27$, $p < .01$) and negative ($t = 4.40$, $p < .01$) advertisements enhanced awareness of the campaigns, whereas soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy ads did not. In addition, candidate-sponsored positive ($t = 4.00$, $p < .01$) and negative ($t = 2.87$, $p < .05$) ads promoted more awareness of the campaigns than issue advocacy ads.

The same pattern of results held for viewers' perceptions of knowledge of the candidates. Compared to controls, candidate-sponsored positive ($t = 4.00$, $p < .01$) and negative ($t = 5.50$, $p < .01$) ads fostered perception of knowledge of the candidates, but soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy ads did not. In addition, candidate-sponsored positive ($t = 4.29$, $p < .01$) and negative ($t = 2.79$, $p < .05$) advertisements contributed more to perceptions of knowledge of candidates than issue advocacy ads.

Hypothesis 5 predicted that, compared to positive ads, both candidate-sponsored negative ads and soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy ads are perceived by viewers as dampening interest in campaigns and suppressing likelihood of voting. This prediction was not supported.

Contrary to prediction, candidate-sponsored political ads enhanced viewers' interest in campaigns. Compared to controls who viewed no political ads, participants who viewed both positive ($t = 2.38$, $p < .05$) and negative ($t = 4.42$, $p < .01$) advertisements expressed greater interest in the campaigns. In addition, those who viewed candidate-sponsored negative ads

demonstrated greater interest than participants who watched soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy ads ($t = 2.99$, $p < .01$).

Results on likelihood of voting were generally weak. There was no main effect for experimental condition. The pattern of means illustrated in Table 2 suggests that, of all the advertising approaches, only the mean involving candidate-sponsored positive advertising stands out, enhancing participation in comparison to controls. However, post-hoc analysis reveals that the difference in these means merely approached significance ($t = 1.88$, $p < .10$). Followup tests to the main effect for party identification on likelihood of voting produced transparent results. Subsequent post-hoc analyses indicated simply that party identification, whether Democratic ($t = 3.32$, $p < .01$) or Republican ($t = 2.19$, $p < .05$), was associated with an increased likelihood of voting, as compared to nonaffiliation.

Discussion

This investigation attempted to assess the influence of soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy ads in U. S. House and Senate campaigns, by comparing the effects of issue advocacy advertising as opposed to candidate-sponsored positive and negative ads on both viewer attitudes toward candidates and perceptions of matters which are intrinsic to democratic processes, such as awareness, knowledge, interest, and participation. The study assumed that issue advocacy ads that target specific candidates function much like candidate-sponsored negative ads, except that they circumvent usual safeguards with respect to accountability, thus doing even greater damage to the democratic process. The pattern of results provide considerable nuance as to the workings and effects of soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy ads.

The results failed to support predictions which posited greater influence for candidate-sponsored negative ads over positive ads, or greater influence of soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy ads over candidate-sponsored positive or negative ads. Instead, the pattern of results revealed that efficacy of specific political advertising approaches varies based on viewer party affiliation, thus offering qualified support for the interaction prediction of experimental condition and political party identification.

None of the advertising approaches exerted any appreciable influence on Democratic identifiers. There are two plausible explanations for this finding. First, research suggests that Democrats are less susceptible than Republicans or nonpartisans to the influence of negative ads (Ansolabehere & Iyengar, 1995), and two of the three advertising genres employed in the study were negative (both the candidate-sponsored negative and soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy categories). Second, late polls revealed that Democratic candidates were slightly ahead of their Republican opponents in two of the three campaigns featured in the study, with margins that increased by election day. Thus, the Democratic viewers in the study may have been more committed to their candidate preferences and, therefore, less susceptible to the influence the campaign advertising.

Candidate-sponsored positive ads affected both Republican and nonaffiliated viewers' perceptions of sponsor character, but exerted no other effects. This result for positive advertising suggests that, to the extent that positive ads exert influence, the effect is principally to bolster viewers' perceptions of the character of an ad's sponsors. Candidate character is, of course, an instrumental decision criteria for voters (Asher, 1980; Campbell, 1983; Graber, 1980; Hahn & Goncher, 1972; Just et al., 1996; Kirkpatrick, Lyons, & Fitzgerald, 1975; O'Keefe, 1975; Pfau & Burgoon, 1989; Pomper, 1975; Popkin, 1991), although research suggests that it exerts greater influence early, rather than late, in election cycles (Becker & McCombs, 1978; Gopoian, 1982; Hofstetter, Zukin, & Bus, 1978; Kennamer & Chaffee, 1982; Kinder, 1978; Patterson, 1980;

Popkin, 1991). This study was conducted near the end of an election cycle, and it featured highly visible races. If candidate-sponsored positive ads exert more expansive influence beyond just perceptions of character, as past studies imply (Ansolabehere & Iyengar, 1995; Atkin et al., 1973; Atkin & Heald, 1976; Hofstetter & Bus, 1980; Josyln, 1981; Patterson & McClure, 1976), this investigation would have been less likely to discern such effects.

Candidate-sponsored negative and soft-money issue advocacy advertising exerted unique impacts. Candidate-sponsored negative ads exerted sizable influence on Republican viewers, fostering more positive overall attitudes toward sponsors and promoting more positive perceptions of sponsors' competence and character. This result offers further support for Ansolabehere and Iyengar's finding that, "the more Republican or conservative a viewer is, the more receptive he or she is to attacks" (1995, p. 93).

Candidate-sponsored negative ads exerted a modest backlash effect among nonpartisan viewers, reducing viewers' perception of the overall attitude of sponsoring candidates. This result offers qualified support for the findings of Stewart (1975), Swinyard (1981), Merritt (1984), Garramone (1984, 1985), Roddy & Garramone (1988), Garramone et al., (1990), Shapiro and Rieger (1989, 1992), and Basil et al. (1991) that candidate-sponsored negative ads can backfire on sponsors. However, the results of this study suggest that backlash effects may be a function of partisanship, primarily confined to unaffiliated prospective voters. In this sense, this finding is at odds with Ansolabehere and Iyengar's (1995) conclusion that nonpartisans are more susceptible than partisans to the influence of negative ads, while at the same time, it supports their position that nonpartisans are more repulsed than partisans by negative ads.

One of the most interesting and important findings of this study is that soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy ads exerted a persistent impact, uniquely, on unaffiliated viewers. The issue advocacy ads enhanced overall attitudes toward candidates who were implicitly supported in the ads, and they produced more positive perceptions of these candidates' competence and character. These findings are consistent with the results of the only other study conducted as to the political influence of third-party-sponsored issue advocacy ads, which found nonpartisans to be more susceptible than Republican identifiers to the influence of PAC-sponsored negative political ads (Garramone, 1985). If the purpose of soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy ads is to affect the candidate preferences of potential voters, the results of this investigation confirm that they are stunningly successful with precisely those prospective voters who are in position to tip the balance in close elections: the unaffiliated. Also, the results support the contention of Dreyfuss (1998) and others that, even though issue advocacy ads do not explicitly advocate election or defeat of specific candidates, their attack approach impacts candidate preferences and, as a result, potentially can influence election outcomes.

Perhaps the most important findings of this investigation involve the influence of soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy ads on criteria relevant to the democratic process. Quite apart from the potential influence of specific advertising approaches on viewer candidate preference, do different approaches manifest distinct benefits or consequences for the process of democracy? Only one previous study has examined the impact of soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy advertising on democratic processes, finding no effect on voter participation (Garramone, 1985). However, this study predated the rapid ascent of issue advocacy advertising in contemporary political campaigns (Drinkard, 1998; Dreyfuss, 1998), and it didn't feature party-sponsored ads, which have turned out to be the fastest growing variant of issue advocacy advertising (Brubaker, 1998).

This investigation posited that candidate-sponsored negative and soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy ads would work similarly, promoting greater awareness of the campaigns and knowledge of the candidates, but undermining interest in campaigns and suppressing likelihood of voting. However, the pattern of results indicated a very different pattern, revealing that candidate-sponsored ads, whether positive or negative in valence, and soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy ads, each exert distinct impacts on the democratic process.

Both candidate-sponsored positive and negative advertising enhanced awareness of campaigns and knowledge of the candidates, both in comparison with controls and soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy ads. In addition, both positive and negative candidate-sponsored advertising stimulated interest in campaigns compared to controls, and negative advertising, in particular, generated significantly greater interest than soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy advertising. Finally, the results revealed a tentative finding regarding participation, suggesting that positive ads may uniquely enhance likelihood of voting.

The findings on awareness and knowledge are not surprising in themselves. Previous research indicates that viewer exposure to campaign advertising, generally, is positively associated with learning about candidates and their positions (Ansolabehere & Iyengar, 1995; Atkin, 1973; Atkin & Heald, 1976; Garramone, 1983, 1984; Kaid & Sanders, 1978; Patterson & McClure, 1974, 1976; Hofstetter et al., 1978). However, past research also indicates that negative ads generally are more involving than positive ads (Garramone et al., 1990; Pinkleton, 1998) and, therefore, may contribute to even more learning (Bowen, 1994; Garramone et al., 1990; Shapiro & Rieger, 1989). Findings of this study dispute this contention. No studies have previously examined the influence of soft-money issue advocacy ads on viewer awareness or knowledge, but it was assumed that, since they resemble candidate-sponsored negative ads, they would contribute to greater awareness and knowledge than positive ads. Instead, they proved inferior to candidate-sponsored ads in generating awareness and knowledge.

The finding that positive and negative candidate-sponsored advertising elicits viewer interest in campaigns, with negative ads generating greater interest than soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy ads, is interesting. However it is theoretically unexplainable. If viewers were aware of sponsorship, it could be reasoned that they were more disdainful of issue advocacy ads. However, results revealed that more than 70% of viewers, either were unaware of the sponsors of the issue advocacy ads or mistakenly assumed that candidates sponsored the ads. Further research is required to confirm the unique influence of issue advocacy ads on interest in campaigns and to explore reasons for this phenomenon.

Finally, the results tentatively suggest that candidate-sponsored positive advertising heightens likelihood of voting, whereas candidate-sponsored negative ads and soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy ads exert no influence on participation. Further research is needed to resolve the issue of advertising approach and participation. Results to date, based solely on candidate-sponsored advertising, are inconclusive, some studies revealing that negative ads suppress turnout (Ansolabehere & Iyengar, 1995; Copeland & Johnson-Cartee, 1990; Kahn & Kenney, 1998; Ragsdale & Rusk, 1995), some indicating no effect (Cover, 1986; Finkel & Geer, 1998; Lau et al., in press), and others finding heightened turnout (Geer & Lau, 1998).

Conclusion

The role of soft money in election campaigns, especially its use for issue-advocacy ads, is a defining public policy issue. During 1996, major political parties and special interest groups spent more than $150-million on issue advocacy advertising with political parties surpassing PACs as the primary supporter of this genre of advertising. By 1998, in many Senate and House

campaigns, spending on issue advocacy advertising approached levels spent for paid advertising by candidates themselves (Hurt, 1999; Meyers, 1999). Spending for issue advocacy advertising is projected to increase sharply in the 2000 election cycle.

Despite its increasing role in campaigns, little attention has been paid to the question of the direct influence of soft money on the electorate or its indirect influence on democratic processes. This investigation examined the influence of soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy ads in House and Senate campaigns, comparing the effects of issue advocacy advertising versus candidate-sponsored positive and negative ads on viewer attitudes toward candidates and their perceptions of matters intrinsic to democratic processes, such as awareness, knowledge, interest, and participation.

The pattern of results provide considerable nuance as to the workings and effects of soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy ads. Results revealed no main effects for advertising approach on candidate preference. Instead, advertising approach exerts unique influence depending on viewer political party affiliation. While none of the advertising approaches exerted influence on Democratic viewers, candidate-sponsored negative advertising was especially effective with Republican viewers and soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy advertising was particularly effective with nonpartisan viewers, who are in position to tip the balance in close elections.

The influence of advertising approach on criteria relevant to democratic processes was especially revealing. Contrary to prediction, candidate-sponsored advertising, whether positive or negative, elicited greater viewer awareness and interest in the campaigns and more knowledge of candidates, both compared to controls and to soft-money-sponsored issue advocacy advertising. Voter awareness, interest, and knowledge are positive outcomes, promotive of democratic processes.

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Table 1

Candidate Perception as a Function of Experimental Condition and Political Party Identification

Dependent Measures	Experimental Condition: Control	Candidate-Sponsored Positive	Candidate-Sponsored Negative	Soft-Money Issue Advocacy
DEMOCRATIC VIEWERS				
n	30	38	36	46
Attitude				
M	4.27	4.31	4.23	4.16
SD	0.57	0.34	0.60	0.40
Competence				
M	4.45	4.52	4.69	4.47
SD	0.72	0.59	0.79	0.61
Character				
M	4.23	4.29	4.20	4.09
SD	0.52	0.32	0.57	0.31
REPUBLICAN VIEWERS				
n	14	12	24	22
Attitude				
M	3.99	4.13	4.23[b]	3.93
SD	0.57	0.34	0.60	0.40
Competence				
M	4.40	4.52	4.70[b]	4.26
SD	0.37	1.00	0.73	0.48
Character				
M	4.04	4.26[b]	4.25[b]	3.86
SD	0.48	0.52	0.36	0.29

Table 2

Awareness and Interest in Campaigns, Knowledge of Candidates, and Likelihood of Voting as a Function of Experimental Condition

	Experimental Condition			
		Candidate-Sponsored		Soft-Money
Dependent Measures	Control (n=65)	Positive (n=66)	Negative (n=88)	Issue Advocacy (n=91)
Awareness of Campaigns				
M	2.86	3.35[ad]	3.52[ae]	2.92
SD	1.50	1.33	1.32	1.39
Interest in Campaigns				
M	2.78	3.13[b]	3.43[ad]	2.99
SD	1.54	1.48	1.46	1.39
Knowledge of Candidates				
M	2.58	3.14[ad]	3.35[ae]	2.75
SD	1.38	1.25	1.18	1.32
Likelihood of Voting				
M	55.28	61.18[c]	58.13	54.40
SD	32.25	31.10	31.75	32.88

Note. Perceptions of awareness and interest in campaigns and knowledge of the candidates were assessed using 7-point scales, whereas likelihood of voting in the election was measured with a 0-100-point scale. Higher scores on these measures indicate more enthusiasm for democratic processes.

[a] significant compared to control at $p < .01$.
[b] significant compared to control at $p < .05$.
[c] approaching significance compared to control at $p < .10$.
[d] significant compared to issue advocacy ads at $p < .01$.
[e] significant compared to issue advocacy ads at $p < .05$.

Table 1 (continued)

	Experimental Condition			
		Candidate-Sponsored		Soft-Money
Dependent Measure	Control	Positive	Negative	Issue Advocacy
UNAFFILIATED VIEWERS				
n	19	16	25	21
Attitude				
M	4.17	4.32	3.97[b]	4.39[b]
SD	0.36	0.39	0.81	0.38
Competence				
M	4.42	4.58	4.42	4.97[ac]
SD	0.65	0.56	1.06	0.90
Character				
M	3.94	4.25[a]	4.05	4.28[a]
SD	0.78	0.32	0.84	0.35

Note. Attitude, competence, and character were measured using 7-point scales. Higher scores signify greater influence of ads.

[a] significant compared to control at $p < .01$.
[b] significant compared to control at $p < .05$.
[c] significant compared to positive ads at $p < .05$.

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The Emergence of Integrated Marketing Communications: A Theoretical Overview

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The Emergence of Integrated Marketing Communications: A Theoretical Overview

Abstract

This paper traces the origins of the emerging field of Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC), critically reviews research literature which is seminal to the field, and discusses the future of IMC, including an opportunity for new research.

I. IMC's Origins

Introduction

Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) or "marcom," has emerged as an influential new field, growing from the roots of two established disciplines: marketing and mass communications. Yet, despite its solid roots, IMC is still a developing field that faces serious challenges in building its own unique identity and body of literature.

While some would argue that IMC has been practiced in certain organizations for decades (Hutton, 1996), most would agree with Schultz's assessment that the field has only emerged into the mainstream within the last ten years (Schultz, 1998).

Despite the relative youth of IMC, its acceptance seems to be widespread. According to a 1994 study, researchers found that three-fourths of the organizations surveyed had adopted some form of IMC (Phelps, Plumley, and Johnson, 1994; see Stewart, 1996). Stewart suggests that IMC's acceptance is growing due to marketers' desires to reach increasingly fragmented segments of consumers (Stewart, 1996), as well as due to dramatic changes in the marketing and mass communications environments due to technological innovations and marketplace changes. Marketers have begun to consider IMC in order to address these changes (Duncan, 1993; Duncan & Everett, 1993; see Stewart, 1996).

IMC's emergence as a vital field has not only been reflected in the business world, but also in the academy. Pioneering academic programs in IMC were established as far back as 1984 at the University of St. Thomas (Hutton, 1996), and in 1988 at Northwestern University (Caywood & Ewing, 1991). The origins and evolution of these programs reflect their roots in both the marketing and mass communications disciplines. For example, at St. Thomas, the IMC program was initially conceived with a mass communications focus. However, with input from the local business community in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area, the program emerged with a curriculum fully integrating marketing and communications courses (Hutton, 1996). At Northwestern, the IMC program emerged from the existing Medill School of

Journalism. But again, those founding the program recognized the need for a unique approach integrating marketing and mass communications (Caywood & Ewing, 1991).

The founders of the Northwestern program were also influenced by the American Association of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), which recommended that academic programs incorporate more coursework in public policy, communications, international issues, and ethics. So the IMC program which emerged at Northwestern blended courses in marketing, including "marketing management," "consumer behavior," and "marketing research," with mass communications components, such as "media and message evaluation," and "media relations" (Caywood & Ewing, 1991).

IMC Defined

Despite the signs of practitioner and academic acceptance of IMC noted above, there are also signs of growing pains. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the relative infancy of the literature on the topic. This prompted Duncan, who chairs the IMC program at the University of Colorado, to suggest:

> *"The body of literature on IMC is thin and what is available mostly deals with superficial case histories and anecdotes."* (Duncan & Everett, 1993; see McArthur & Griffin, 1997)

Inconsistencies even exist in the basic definition of the IMC concept. For example, definitions run the gamut from very simple versions to very complex renditions proposed by various IMC consistencies. On the simple, but elegant, side of the scale is a definition rooted very much in the marketing literature, cited by Smith:

> *"Marketing Communications means what it says. It consists of every form of communication relevant to marketing."* (Smith, 1993)

In its simplicity, however, this definition has two flaws. First, it subjugates mass communications to marketing, instead of integrating it fully into the overall marketing goal of "planning and executing the conception, pricing, promotion and distribution of ideas, goods and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organizational objectives (American Marketing Association definition, 1985; see Shaw, 1995). A second flaw of this definition is its ignorance of important strides in literature from the mass communications field. These strides have taken mass communications theory well beyond the traditional "one-way" flow model, which suggested that information and persuasion was simply "transmitted" from a source to a receiver in a process of delivering a stimulus (advertising message) in order to elicit a consumer response. This type of model was first proposed by Shannon and Weaver in 1949 as a "mathematical" model and for a time gained wide acceptance (Perry, 1996).

The one-way communications flow perspective implicit in Smith's IMC definition is clearly at odds with more recent mass communications literature which suggests the incorporation of a feedback loop between the sender of the message (in IMC's case, a marketer) and receivers of the message (i.e. consumers) (Baran & Davis, 1995). This feedback is not only consistent with mass communications research findings, but also with the essence of the marketing goal to satisfy consumer needs.

An even more contemporary model of mass communications goes beyond the incorporation of a feedback loop between the sender and receiver of an IMC message, and instead suggests a true two-way *dialogue* between the parties, which is even more reflective of the marketing goal to "create exchanges" between marketers and consumers. Nickels describes such a model in which the sender of an IMC message (the marketer) also becomes a receiver of consumer messages and vice versa.

> *"Communication is an interaction process. The roles of the sender and the receiver are interchangeable. The concept of feedback confuses such a view because it implies that one is always the sender and one the receiver...communication is not an act that causes a reaction (feedback). It is a process involving a series of responses. Marketing Communications should be viewed as a process that opens channels of information and persuasion...."* (Nickels, 1976)

With these more contemporary models in mind, it is interesting to look at another IMC definition which fits on the complex end of the spectrum--but still does not incorporate contemporary mass communications theory. It was developed by a committee of the American Association of Advertising Agencies, in conjunction with Northwestern faculty consultants. It defines IMC as:

> *"A concept of marketing communications planning that recognizes the added value of a comprehensive plan that evaluates the strategic roles of a variety of communication disciplines--for example, general advertising, direct response, sales promotion, and public relations--and combines these disciplines to provide clarity, consistency, and maximum communication impact."* (Stewart, 1996).

The most obvious flaw in the definition is that it does not incorporate contemporary mass communication models incorporating a two-way exchange of information and ideas. Perhaps this could be due to the over-riding marketing influence historically attached to the AAAA organization (this bias is also clear in the definition's list of communications disciplines: "general advertising" is noted first, and public relations last).

Another perspective is provided by the "working definition" developed by the IMC program faculty at Northwestern. Fortunately, this definition adds the key notion of communication *with* customers and prospects, not just *to* them:

> *"IMC is the process of developing and implementing various forms of persuasive communications programs with customers and prospects over time. The goal of IMC is to influence or directly affect the behavior of the selected communications audience. IMC considers all sources of brand or company contacts which a customer or prospect has with the product or service as potential delivery channels for future messages. Further, IMC makes use of all forms of communication which are relevant to the customer and prospects and to which they might be receptive. In sum, the IMC process starts with the customer or prospect and then works back to determine and define the forms and methods through which persuasive communications programs should be developed."* (Schultz, 1993)

Nickels, in a much more concise manner, contributes another approach incorporating a contemporary mass communications two-way exchange model in his definition of IMC as:

> *"the two-way exchange of information and persuasion that enables the marketing process to function more effectively and efficiently."* (Nickels, see Rothschild, 1987)

Ultimately however, Duncan proposes an IMC definition which avoids some of the limitations of those discussed earlier. His proposal takes the concept of two-way exchange between marketers and consumers to the most refined level when he adds the notion of "interactivity" in his simple, yet inclusive IMC definition:

> *"selling with a consistent voice and look and relationship building through interactivity."* (Duncan, 1994; see Stewart, 1996)

II. IMC's Theoretical Foundations

To better understand IMC, an examination of some of the foundations of marketing and mass communication theory is required. The streams of research which seem most relevant are those related to persuasion and attitude change.

From a mass communications perspective, the most relevant theoretical contributions to IMC are from the literature on persuasion (Perry, 1996), while from a marketing perspective, the study consumer attitudes is seminal (Petty, Unnava, & Strathman, 1991). The literature suggests that consumers base many of their buying decisions upon their attitudes toward brands at the time of purchase. Research into these issues owes much to the field of consumer behavior, which in turn employs social and cognitive psychology research, dealing with the ways human beings process external stimuli (including marketing messages delivered via mass communications vehicles) in their individual decision-making process. This consumer behavior research also owes much to sociology and other social sciences, because it incorporates notions of how consumers process communication stimuli in the context of the larger social environment.

Three theoretical areas are so central to the discussion of persuasion and attitude research that they could be described as foundations of the field. The discussion begins with the seminal "hierarchy of effects" theory and its variants; continues with a discussion of "information processing" models and concludes with the "elaboration likelihood model." Critical commentary will be provided for each theoretical area from the perspective of some of the IMC definition literature presented earlier.

A) Hierarchy of Effects

The "hierarchy of effects" (HOE) school of thought is seminal because it suggests that there is a way to understand (and influence) the ways which marketing and mass communications efforts could effectively change consumer attitudes--and hopefully even consumer behavior. This has helped sustain the influence of this theoretical approach for over a century, starting with some early work in the late 1890s by Lewis (Barry & Howard, 1990).

The original central notion of HOE is that consumers respond to IMC stimuli in a hierarchical manner of at least three psychological and physiological stages. It suggests first that consumers must become aware or think about the stimuli in a stage known as cognition. Once cognizant of the stimuli, consumers then begin to feel some emotion toward the stimuli in the affective stage. Finally, in the conative stage, consumers exhibit a form of behavior, deciding either to act positively upon the stimuli (by making an inquiry about the stimuli, or perhaps even making a purchase), or negatively (deciding not to respond). This original version of HOE, suggested by Lewis, was designed to help explain how the personal selling process worked (Barry & Howard, 1990). Over time, Lewis' original theory has been built upon and adapted by numerous authors, and some of the resulting works have become well-known, particularly three variants: "AIDA," "DAGMAR," and the Lavidge-Steiner Model.

AIDA was adapted from Lewis' work by Strong in 1925 (Barry & Howard, 1990). It expanded the original three stages (cognition, affect, and conation) to four, and codified them as the acronym AIDA (Attention, Interest, Desire, and Action). DAGMAR was an even more recent variant, developed in 1961 by the Advertising Research Foundation. The acronym DAGMAR stands for "Defining Advertising Goals for Measured Advertising Results." This variant is still based upon the original cognition, affect, and conation hierarchy, but refines the process to the five-step sequence of Exposure, Perception, Communication (knowledge), Communication (attitude) and Action.

The Lavidge-Steiner model is another adaptation of Lewis' original same three-stage process. These authors, also in 1961, suggested a six-step process, flowing in the following order: Awareness, Knowledge, Liking, Preference, Conviction, and Purchase. A key contribution of the Lavidge-Steiner model was its recognition that successful accomplishment of its six steps usually represented a "long-term process." (Lavidge & Steiner, 1960).

Many other variants of the cognitive-affect-conation hierarchy have also been developed over time, but they are too numerous to all be discussed. However, it is interesting to note that not all of the HOE models employ the same *order* of the effects. For example, at least three other alternative orderings of the HOE theory have been presented, as outlined in figure 1 below and described as follows:

Krugman in 1965 suggested that some consumers, particularly in low involvement product categories (i.e. toilet paper), may actually react to external mass communications stimuli with a cognition-conation-affect response. This implies that the consumer makes brand decisions based simply upon knowledge of a brand's existence (created through marketing messages presented via mass communications vehicles), and acts directly on the awareness, deciding only after the purchase whether or not they *like* the brand.

Figure 1
Traditional vs. Alternative Hierarchy of Effects Models

Models	Hierarchy Sequence
Lewis, AIDA, DAGMAR, Lavidge-Steiner	**Cognition→Affect→Conation**
Krugman	**Cognition→Conation→Affect**
Zajonc	**Affect→Conation→Cognition**
Ray *et al.*	**Conation→Affect→Cognition**

Another alternative HOE model is Zajonc's suggestion that some products may be purchased primarily because consumers develop a strong affective response to a mass communications stimuli, and effectively "skip" the cognition step, only pondering their purchase after it is made. This implies an affect-conation-cognition order. Zajonc bases this suggestion on his "mere exposure" hypothesis, which suggests that the more frequently an individual is exposed to a stimulus, the more positively they will evaluate it (Hansen, 1984).

Ray *et al* suggested in 1973 that the purchase of impulse items may even represent another order: conation-affect-cognition, in which consumers buy a product first (i.e. a pain reliever requested out of desperation in a convenience store while experiencing a headache on an out-of-town trip), then decide whether they actually like the product and finally think rationally about how well it fits their needs.

Perhaps the most intriguing of all the HOE variants is one proposed in 1986 by Vaughn, an industry practitioner. His model re-structures the simple linear HOE sequence which has evolved since 1898 into a more complex four-quadrant model segregated into two dimensions: HOE for high vs. low involvement products and HOE for products requiring primarily cognitive (rational) or primarily affective (emotional) processing (Vaughn, 1986). Vaughn's model, depicted in figure 2 below, is unique in the HOE literature because it suggests four different HOE contingencies. It is has proven useful as a practical guide to the type of advertising strategy which would be most appropriate given clients who market high vs. low involvement products and products which would suggest a rational appeal (i.e. life insurance) vs. a more emotional appeal (i.e. fashion accessories such as perfume).

Figure 2
Vaughn's Contingency Hierarchy of Effects Model

	Rationale	Emotional
High Involvement	**Cognitive→Affect→Conation** *(life insurance)*	**Affect→Cognition→Conation** *(perfume)*
Low Involvement	**Conation→Cognition→Affect** *(liquid household cleaner)*	**Conation→Affect→Cognition** *(popsicle)*

Source: Vaughn, 1986

Regardless of which HOE variant one subscribes to, the fact remains that this theoretical area is based upon the fundamental notion that consumers proceed through a prescribed linear sequence in response to mass communications stimuli. But there are three serious critiques of this theoretical perspective: a lack of conclusive evidence that any of the HOE models actually work; the suggestion of all HOE models that the process moves in a one-way marketer-consumer direction; and the notion that the linear sequence is somehow static and applicable to all consumers. A discussion of each follows:

1) Lack of Evidence

This critique is a curious one for a theory which is so popular and long-lasting. Yet, Barry and Howard, in an exhaustive survey of the existing HOE research and literature, concluded that "little evidence was found to support the existence of an advertising hierarchy" (Barry & Howard, 1986). Palda, in a much earlier survey (in 1966) came to much the same conclusion. (Palda, 1966). On the other hand, both sets of writers could not find any conclusive proof that the HOE theory is *invalid*. So, it seems, HOE will live on in the minds of many in the marketing and mass communications fields--until some future research breakthrough can finally provide evidence.

2) One-Way Process

This critique is based more in the mass communications theory literature which suggests, as outlined in the first section of this paper, that effective marketing efforts cannot be limited to a one-way transmission of information from the marketer (sender) to the consumer (receiver). Yet, all the HOE variants discussed implicitly place the consumer in a receiver role, and then attempt to explain how the receiver reacts to transmission from the sender. Schultz criticizes this one-way bias when he writes:

> "*The marketer or advertiser is always in control...the consumer is no more than a pawn in the process the marketer devises. Or at least that's what the model suggests.*" (Schultz, 1996)

It is understandable that Lewis and some of the early HOE proponents would not account for this inconsistency between the one-way nature of HOE and the contemporary interactive information-exchange views of the marketing process. It is a bit more difficult to explain why more recent HOE theorists have not yet fully come to grips with bridging this gap. Perhaps in the future, a model will be developed to reconcile this inconsistency.

3) Static, Linear Nature

This critique applies to all HOE models, except perhaps, Vaughn's FCB Grid, and argues that consumer information processing is not a concept which can be explained by a single linear sequence of events for all individuals, and that the process is not as simple as early stimulus-response thinking in the field which held that advertisers provided the stimulus that consumers would respond to. This line of thought suggests that HOE models are much too rigid in their structure, and as such, fail to take into consideration differences in consumer interests or information processing abilities, as well as differences in the quality of the mass communications stimuli (Schultz, 1996). Smith also argues that the rigid, linear nature of most HOE models is unrealistic in describing how consumers actually behave when he suggests:

> "*Buyers can...avoid moving in a straight line or hierarchy of stages when making a more considered purchase (extended problem solving). For example, during the evaluation stage a potential buyer may go back to the information stage to obtain more information before making a decision to buy. Ideally, these models should allow for these and other loops caused by "message decay" (or forgetting), changes in attitudes, competitive distractions, etc.*" (Smith, 1993)

These critiques do seem valid, and from this perspective, most HOE models seem to be overly simplistic in their attempt to explain the consumer attitude change process.

B) Information Processing Models

Partly in an effort to overcome the HOE over-simplification critique noted above, an alternative view of the persuasion process, the Information Processing Model (IPM) emerged in 1973, proposed by McGuire. The model builds upon the HOE tradition by proposing a sequence of six steps which the process of persuasion is presumed to follow: Presentation (of the stimuli), Attention, Comprehension, Yielding, Retention, and finally Overt Behavior (Perry, 1996). At this point, IPM theory radically expands upon the HOE tradition by incorporating important five elements of the Shannon and Weaver mathematical model of the mass communications process: source, message, channel, receiver, and destination. McGuire's IPM therefore deepens the understanding of how consumers are impacted by mass communications stimuli at each stage of the persuasion process. IPM also demonstrates how complex the hierarchy of steps can be when the effects of each of the five communication process steps are considered. For example, this model takes into consideration communication factors like source credibility, variations in the message appeal (i.e. fear or sensationalism), channel variables such as use of medium (i.e. TV vs. newspaper), receiver characteristics including individual personalities of consumers and prior opinions concerning the product, and finally, destination factors which might lead people to resist the message (Perry, 1996). While McGuire's IPM model does illustrate that the persuasion process is not as simple as most HOE models indicate, it still has some inconsistencies:

> *"A fundamental assumption (of the McGuire IPM) seems to be that no one stage (of the persuasion process) can be skipped, or the entire process breaks down. For example, if a person ignores...a message, no intended behavior effect can occur. Of course, persuasion does not always follow this invariant sequence. In some cases, people may yield to messages before they understand them, if the message comes from an especially admired source, for instance. Like all models, McGuire's simplifies communication."* (Perry, 1996)

Despite these criticisms, McGuire's IPM influenced the development of additional work in the field by focusing attention on consumers' use of memory to facilitate each stage in the persuasion process. For example, Engel modified the IPM, renaming it the "Cognitive IPM." This CIPM proposes a similar sequence of persuasion: Exposure (vs. McGuire's "presentation"), Attention, Comprehension, Yielding, and Retention (Engel dropped McGuire's "behavior" stage). Engel also modified the model to focus more on the role of memory rather than the communication process, and this is the crux of his contribution: that the message stimulus must be "interpreted and meaning attributed to it...(and)...the stimulus must be accepted into the cognitive structure of beliefs, attitudes, and knowledge of the consumer." (Kitchen, 1994)

A criticism of Engel's CIPM is its over-simplification of the memory function. Presented as it is above, the memory component of the model suggests it is a "black box" which sheds little light on its inner-workings. This criticism is addressed by another CIPM, this one developed by Thorson to help explain consumers' reactions to televised advertising messages. Thorson's model attempts to peer into the "black box" to explain the mental structures and activities which drive the persuasion process by theorizing that each individual has permanent memory "stores" as well as "processing mechanisms" which coordinate processing between the stores. Her model also delineates which stores and mechanisms are activated consciously and those which the consumer is not consciously aware of (Perry, 1996). Critical to the model are the two stores described as "episodic memory" and "semantic memory:"

> *"Episodic memory involves the autobiographical laying down of events as they occur over time....(and)...contains details such as the sequence in which events occurred, feelings experienced during them, and also seemingly irrelevant details like the color of the sky and the temperature of the room....Semantic memory is knowledge of the world. Consumers can name five heavy duty laundry detergents, and list product attributes for each of those detergents."* (Thorson, 1990)

According to Thorson's model, consumers' feelings of affect are laid down as traces in the episodic and semantic memory stores, to be resurrected later in life when stimulated by a mass communications message. This can occur even when consumers are processing the message at a low-involvement level (Thorson, 1990), and therefore can be powerful triggers in persuading consumers. It seems that a practical application of this CIPM would be advertisers' use of popular music from the youth of consumers in their target audience (i.e. 1970s hit records in the current Burger King advertising campaign). The advertisers are obviously hoping that the association of these songs with their message will help create positive connections between their brand and the targeted consumers when the consumers resurrect the song from their episodic memory stores. As its ready application to advertising practice suggests, Thorson's model has significant intuitive appeal. However, it is somewhat limited because it considers only "input" from the advertiser, and does not make an attempt to demonstrate how the processing activity fits with other traditional aspects of the HOE or other IPM models by McGuire and Engel.

C) Elaboration Likelihood Model

Inadequacies in the HOE and IPM models noted above, as well as general dissatisfaction with the state of existing research into attitude change, seemed to be the driving forces behind the development of a more recent theory: the elaboration likelihood model (ELM). In fact, ELM proponents Petty and Cacioppo cited a passage from Fishbein and Ajzen as a primary impetus for their research work:

> *"the attitude area is characterized by a great deal of conceptual ambiguities and methodological deficiencies...It is painfully obvious that what is required at this point in time...is...a rather serious reconsideration of basic assumptions and thoughtful theoretical reanalyzes of problems confronting the field."*
> (Fishbein & Ajzen; see Petty & Cacioppo, 1986)

Motivated by this theoretical gap, Petty and Cacioppo devised a model which overcame many of the problems with HOE and other earlier theories. Their answer was a theoretical framework which attempts to marry psychological notions of how consumers process messages with mass communications-oriented theory about the content of message stimuli. Put in the simplest terms possible, ELM proposes two alternative routes for a mass communications message to be processed. The first route, central processing, occurs when two ELM variables are present. Specifically, the consumer must be: a) motivated to receive and consider the message; and b) able to receive and consider the message. If both of these conditions are present, the ELM proposes that a consumer will process a message very thoroughly and critically, in the course of which the consumer forms associations with previous knowledge. This careful scrutiny is the "elaboration" referred to in the ELM name, and it ultimately leads, according to the model, to the creation of relatively strong and long-lasting attitudes about the stimuli.

ELM proposes a second alternate route to processing: peripheral. In this case, information processing by consumers is subject to the same two variables noted above: motivation and ability. However, under peripheral processing, consumers are less motivated and less able (perhaps because of distractions, message confusion, etc.) to give the message the type of careful scrutiny they would give it with central processing. In this event, consumers are much more likely to rely upon superficial or "peripheral" aspects of the message to form their attitudes. These "peripheral" cues could be factors such as the attractiveness of the message presenter, the credibility of the message source, or even the style elements of the message presentation. Unfortunately, attitudes about messages processed peripherally, according to ELM, will not be as long-lasting or as resistant to change as those processed centrally.

ELM has emerged as a "leading theory of persuasion" (Perry, 1996) and intuitively, it has several advantages over HOE models. First, it assumes that not all consumers process information the same way, and offers alternative processing routes for consumers with differing levels of motivation about the stimuli, as well as consumers with differing levels of ability to receive the message. Second, it also assumes that not all message content is the same, and that consumers process different content in different ways, leading to some important marketing implications. For example, ELM would suggest that a low-involvement product with very little, if any, substantive competitive advantage would have very little prospect of success if marketers chose a message strategy which would attempt to stimulate central processing (i.e. "Pepsi Cola provides 41g of carbohydrates per 12 ounce can vs. 39g of carbohydrates per 12 ounce can of Coca Cola"). It would be highly unlikely for consumers to be motivated enough by this type of message appeal to perform the type of highly-involved, thoughtful processing it would take to change attitudes about Pepsi vs. Coke. As a result, Pepsi marketing efforts intuitively recognize ELM, and as a result, design many appeals to be processed easily peripherally (i.e. use of Cindy Crawford as a Pepsi spokesperson, and promotion of the Pepsi logo, Pepsi packaging, and Pepsi "Generation Next" tagline).

Despite its appeal and growing acceptance, ELM is not without its critics. Perry summarizes some of the feelings toward ELM when he writes:

> *"Because of its scope, some scholars may have viewed it (ELM) as a bit imperialistic. The ELM has become a lightning rod, both for praise and criticism. Some critics have argued that it is vague, incoherent, not falsifiable, and/or inconsistent with available evidence. Inevitably, research will lead to its continued modification and perhaps eventual abandonment."* (Perry, 1996)

ELM criticisms fall into two broad categories, the first questioning the methodology used in developing the model, and the second suggesting an inconsistency with emerging IMC thought.

1) Methodological Critiques

A criticism of ELM found in the literature is a questioning of Petty and Cacioppo's selection of message stimuli for their research. The authors developed their stimuli, representing "weak" messages on one hand, and "strong" messages on the other, by generating arguments and pre-testing them for relative scores of "persuasiveness." This methodology has come under attack by some scholars because it uses a "quantitative" rather than a "conceptual" standard. Specifically, critics argue that the model should be restructured to address the "quality" of test messages and not just how they score in the methodological exercise explained above by the authors. (Mongeau & Williams, 1996) Another criticism of the methodology used to support ELM is that its "weak" vs. "strong" arguments do not account for differences in social norms underlying individuals' perceptions of argument strength (O'Shaughnessy, 1992).

2) Communication Theory Critique

It should also be noted that ELM, like the HOE models which precede it, implicitly considers the communication process as a one-way concept. While the model does allow for the possibility that more central processing of messages can occur upon repeated exposure or upon a change in consumer motivation, it does not explicitly consider the more contemporary interactive, information exchange models of mass communications discussed in the first section of the paper.

III. IMC's Transcendance Of Advertising

The seminal persuasion and attitude change theories discussed above relate to many aspects of the marketing and mass communications fields, not just IMC. In particular, the advertising field has benefited from this work (Cohen & Areni, 1991). Yet, according to the literature, the implications of persuasion and attitude change theory transcend advertising alone. Indeed these theories now point to mass communications effects that blur the distinction of traditional advertising (Schultz, Tannenbaum & Lauterborn, 1993)

Schultz et al. suggest that the persuasive effects of traditional advertising are different from--and more limited than--the effects which can be generated through a disciplined use of IMC. They go so far as to suggest that traditional advertising alone can no longer be expected to bear the burden of communicating most marketing information to consumers in an effort to persuade or change attitudes. (Schultz, Tannenbaum & Lauterborn, 1993) They also argue that new technology, particularly the widespread use of sophisticated bar code scanners, has not only helped marketers better target their best consumer prospects, but also to suggest that the power of traditional advertising is faltering in the face of changes in the marketplace.

DeLozier's argument is consistent with Schultz's and it too suggests that IMC effects are indeed different from, and perhaps more powerful than, those created by traditional promotional efforts (including advertising) alone:

> *"The promotional mix has long been viewed as the company's sole communications link with the consumer. However, this kind of provincialism can often lead to suboptimization of the firm's total communication effort. Because, if viewed in isolation, promotion can actually work against other elements in the marketing communications mix...(which are)...price, product, retail outlets, and all other company actions which consumers might perceive as communicating something about the company's total product offering."* (DeLozier, 1976)

Given these concerns about the limitations of traditional advertising, what does the literature suggest about its changing role vis-a-vis other elements of the marketing communications mix? Schultz suggests that advertising's role should be re-examined and placed into a larger IMC perspective as it relates to its impact on consumer attitudes (Schultz, 1996). But what does this suggest about the theoretical foundations of the persuasion research streams outlined in the earlier theoretical discussion? Traditional advertising was a key factor driving many of the assumptions of models ranging from HOE to ELM. Many of the models were developed with the notion that advertising would be a major, if not the dominant, mass communications vehicle to be used to deliver marketing messages. Specifically, major HOE models, including the Lavidge-Steiner approach, assumed that advertising would be a driving force in generating at least the first of the hierarchical effects: awareness (Lavidge & Steiner, 1960). Among the IPM theorists, Thorson based much of her research upon the effects of televised advertising. (Thorson, Perry, 1996) And much of Petty & Cacioppo's ELM theoretical work is based upon an analysis of different types of "persuasive communication," including advertising messages. (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986)

Some suggest that the role of traditional advertising in these theoretical frameworks is about to be replaced (Rust & Varki, 1996). Others argue that advertising will continue to be a valuable tool—but only within the larger framework of IMC (Schultz, 1993; Heinlein, 1994).

IV. The Future of IMC

What does the future hold for IMC? The literature suggests the field is destined for growth. Some predict a bright future for IMC, promoted by advances in technology (Nickels, 1976), and others predict that IMC is "here to stay" (Schultz, 1996).

But even if IMC's future seems assured, the field faces some serious challenges it must address if it is to continue to grow and mature. There are many questions and challenges to be answered by future research in the central theoretical areas of HOE, IPM and ELM, but they may not be as critical to the IMC research agenda as a paradigm shift that may be imminent in the field. The re-thinking has been suggested by Schultz, and amounts to a change from the current IMC perspective of initiating the communication process from "inside" an organization and targeting it to consumers who are "outside." Schultz suggests that this "inside-out" paradigm could very well be flipped entirely on its ear by rapid advances in telecommunications technology which he sees as the catalyst for a "21st Century Marketplace" dominated by a new paradigm: "outside-in." He further explains:

> *"In the outside-in scenario, the consumer or customer access or requests information as needed or desired...In the 21st Century Marketplace, senders become receivers and receivers become senders. The market is interactive and the communication flow is in both directions, not just outbound from the marketer."* (Schultz, 1996)

Schultz goes on to illustrate this change when he suggests scenarios under which consumers would essentially initiate the communication process. For example, if a consumer was in the market for a new stereo system, they would likely consult some media reports as well as conventional IMC messages to determine which brands they would most likely consider. Then, the consumer could essentially, through the use of new technology, send a message to stereo manufacturers asking them to propose a marketing solution (product, delivery terms, pricing) to fit their needs. The consumer would then choose from the alternatives presented and make a buying decision--all on-line or through other new technological tools.

Such a "21st Century" process is currently feasible on a small scale through the internet for a limited percentage of the population, but Schultz argues that such a scenario will be much more common in the "21st Century Marketplace," with traditional marketer-consumer roles reversed. (Schultz, 1996)

But what would IMC's place be in such a new order? Would this new model negate the need for traditional IMC tools such as advertising, direct marketing, public relations, and sales promotion? It could be argued that these tools would still be required, albeit delivered in a much more decentralized and sophisticated manner. For example, in the stereo-buying case noted above, public relations could still be employed to create an on-line "buzz" about a certain brand of stereo, and on-line advertising used to stimulate awareness for that brand--both so that the consumer would add this brand to their consideration set. Then, direct marketing would take over, managing the "response" mechanism whereby the manufacturer electronically communicates its marketing message back to the original consumer "sender." Finally, the sales promotion function could still perform its traditional role of "sweetening the deal" (i.e. by providing on-line sales incentives or targeted price reductions) to stimulate a quick consumer purchase decision.

This "21st Century Marketplace" model, therefore, suggests new research opportunities, perhaps even studies of an experimental nature. Such studies could seek to simulate the type of "outside-in" consumer buying process suggested by Schultz to determine empirically whether the model is valid.

One experimental approach could be through a study of groups of consumers who might be directed to seek out and purchase a specific product (i.e. stereo, or cell phone.) For example, a control group might be exposed to "traditional" IMC messages (advertising, direct marketing, public relations, sales promotion) and asked to make their purchase decision in the "traditional" manner (i.e. through a personal sales contact in person or via telephone). Simultaneously, a test group of consumers might be asked to make a purchase decision employing Schultz's model. Perhaps these subjects would be provided with internet access to "send" their message to competing brand "receivers." Pre-programmed message responses from each brand could then be transmitted back to the consumer "senders" and the subjects could be asked to make their purchase decision in response to these messages, and make the actual purchase on-line. A diagram of the sample groups involved in this type of proposed experimental research design is outlined below:

Figure 3
Possible Research Design to Test "21st Century Marketplace" Model

	IMC Message Stimuli	**Purchase Process**
Test Group	*On-line advertising* *Chat-room buzz* *Direct response via e-mail* *On-line coupon/incentive*	*Consumer "sends" on-line request for "bids" to marketers;* *Marketers "respond" via on-line offers* *Consumer "buys" on-line*
Control Group	*Traditional promotion mix: advertising, public relations, direct response, sales promo, and personal selling*	*Traditional store/catalog purchase process*

Summary

In summary, IMC has taken root in a fertile area where marketing and mass communications intersect. The field is fortunate because it can borrow from the rich research traditions of both of its parents. IMC's future seems bright and rich with opportunities for further research inquiry which could help further the field. This work could help address crucial issues, break new ground, and help fulfill a need that Schultz identified during a conference in 1996, when he made the following observation:

> *"The...thing which struck me was that these people were at the meeting primarily to discuss and identify how and where and under what circumstances and IMC research agenda might be developed for their organizations or clients. To them, IMC was a legitimate research topic. It was something they wanted to investigate more."* (Schultz, 1996)

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Agency Concerns Over Newspaper Advertising

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Agency Concerns Over Newspaper Advertising

Abstract

A random survey of U.S. advertising agencies examined concerns about newspaper advertising. The results suggest that agencies still view newspapers positively. They also do not view online communications as a replacement for newspapers. However, agencies also appear to have concerns about the audiences they will reach through newspaper advertisements. In other words, the newspaper product is still attractive to advertising agencies, but the audiences they provide are key concerns.

Agency Concerns Over Newspaper Advertising

The two main sources of income for newspapers have both reached near all-time highs. Combined subscriptions to daily and weekly newspapers have increased to 137 million in 1996 (NAA, 1999). Advertising revenues have risen as well, increasing by 7% in 1997 (Coen, 1998).

Newspaper executives nonetheless are concerned. Newspaper readership has not kept pace with increases in the U.S. population. Thus, while readership has increased, penetration -- or the percentage of the households that subscribe to a newspaper -- has not.

Similar concerns surround advertising revenue. While ad revenue is growing, newspapers are losing ground to television on the percentage of advertising revenue the two media attract. This has reached the point where television now receives a higher percentage of ad revenue than do newspapers. Thus, while ad revenue is on the upswing, reliance on newspaper advertising is declining (Jones, 1997).

The reasons behind this decreased reliance on newspaper advertising is the focus of the present study. A national mail survey of advertising executives examines the extent to which agencies are decreasing their reliance on newspaper advertising and asks the executives to rate several concerns that have been identified as some of the reasons for this decreasing reliance. Further, we compare the concerns across those agencies that have reduced their reliance on newspaper advertising, those that have increased their reliance on newspaper advertising and those that have not changed their reliance. Thus, we will look at whether certain concerns are more significant with advertising agencies that are actually decreasing their reliance on newspaper advertising. Finally, we compare concerns across large, medium and small ad agencies.

The results could have far-reaching implications for the newspaper industry. Responses may identify problems with the image of newspapers and potential shortcomings of the use of newspapers as an advertising vehicle. In addition, the results could point to areas that the newspaper industry will need to address if it wants to reclaim the leadership position in advertising revenue.

Newspapers provide an important source of information about the key issues and events of the day. Attracting increased advertising revenue will ensure that newspapers will continue to survive to provide this important service to members of society.

Background

Since 1993, U.S. newspaper advertising revenues have steadily increased, fueled by a robust American economy. The good news is that revenue is expected to continue to grow through the year 2000, with the millennium bringing in even more advertising spending (Jones, 1997). More specific reasons cited for this growth include: expanded classified advertising sales growing at an average annual rate of 10%; increased national advertising as a result of new product introductions; and improvements in rate and sales management programs provided by large newspaper organizations such as Gannett (Jones, 1997).

In spite of this resurgence and in spite of being the largest advertising revenue shareholding medium for decades, newspapers have recently fallen behind a relative newcomer, television. In 1997, television passed newspapers to establish primacy in advertising spending. Even though newspapers were inched out by only a small margin, this gap is widening as television continues its move into the future with a 1997 share of 23.8% to newspapers' share of 22.2%. Thus, while the raw dollar figures spent on newspaper advertising are increasing, editors are concerned that newspapers are getting a smaller percentage of advertising revenue.

The decline in reliance of newspaper advertising can be traced back to developments from two decades ago. Beginning in the 1970s when technology began to change the face of media, newspaper companies with high capital improvement and unionized labor costs fell behind when all other media were profiting. Media that had depended upon technology from their beginnings, such as television and direct mail, were able to reap sizable rewards during the roaring '80s. By the early 1990s, national advertising had faded from its position as a major contributor to most newspapers' bottom line, and local advertising began to sustain newspapers' first-place position in advertising spending (Cassino, 1997).

This led an industry leader, Cathleen Black, CEO of the Newspaper Association of American, to remind the Advertising Research Foundation that newspaper readership was on the rise, with 115 million readers in 1993 compared to 113 million in 1991 (Kerwin, 1993a). And on any Sunday morning, more than two-thirds of the adult population read a newspaper.

Aware of newspapers' current situation, Black also urged newspaper executives to respond to advertisers' concerns by creating a national newspaper network. She cited several "inextricably linked" obstacles affecting newspaper sales efforts and the continual decline in newspapers' share of advertising dollars. Among the concerns were: negative perceptions that advertisers and agencies hold toward newspapers as a medium; young media buyers' lack of experience with newspapers and potential bias against them when choosing a medium; the well-publicized decline in readership which suggests a dying medium; and collective negative perceptions causing newspapers to be eliminated from consideration for national advertisers.

Black didn't assign all of the responsibility to advertisers' perceptions or advertising agency bias, however. She also mentioned newspaper industry issues, such as the lack of invoice and rate card standardization, the absence of a "one order, one bill" system and the shift in retail advertising with new marketplace entrants like warehouse clubs, which are not heavy users of newspaper advertising (Kerwin, 1993a)

Questions raised by the issues plaguing the newspaper industry have been examined in a number of studies.

One study (King, Reid and Morrison, 1997) examined advertising practitioners' opinions about newspapers as an advertising medium for national accounts. This study surveyed media specialists in the top 200 U. S. advertising agencies to find out what they thought of newspapers as a medium for national advertising. Agencies represented in the study ranged from less than $75 million to more than $300 million in 1993 domestic billing.

Results showed newspapers coming in second to last, only ahead of billboards, when rated for effectiveness on factors used to select media for national accounts. Network television was judged the most effective medium for national advertising accounts by 87% of the respondents in the study (King, Reid and Morrison, 1997). Media specialists' backgrounds, including personal use of or non-use of newspapers, did not affect their judgments about newspapers as a medium.

Amid many negative perceptions, newspapers were perceived to be more effective when compared to others as a secondary medium, for coordination of promotion with image advertising and as a vehicle for complex sales messages. Newspapers were judged low on their ability to meet cost, efficiently target a market or offer opportunities for creative execution. Also, media specialists were interested in having the newspaper industry look for ways to increase the medium's targeting abilities.

One potential problem with the King et al. (1997) study was the low level of use of newspaper as an advertising medium among agencies included in the sample. Only a fourth of the sample worked for agencies that placed more than 15% of their national billings in newspapers, while almost half (44%) of the respondents worked for agencies where national newspaper billings were less than 5%.

Although King et al. (1997) found newspapers were perceived to be a less effective vehicle than network television when it comes to producing sales, share or trial results, Tolley (1993) found newspaper advertisements to be effective in actual application. In a study examining the effects of newspaper advertisements on national brands, Tolley conducted a split-run experiment testing previously untested, non-promotional, color ads for four packaged good products. Results were based on scanner data collected on newspaper subscribers shopping at a city's major supermarket.

This study found untested, small newspaper, Run-Of-Paper image ads provided strong support for newspapers as a medium for branding. Three of the four ads increased both sales and share of market significantly. Brand trial increased 20% by non-users of one of the tested products. Overall, the four ads produced a 10% increase in sales. Even with evidence suggesting the effectiveness of newspaper advertising for national brands, however, it is still local advertising that has sustained the medium during difficult times.

Local businesses and merchants use a variety of media in their advertising, and they rely heavily on daily newspaper advertising, according to Nowak, Cameron and Krugman (1993). In this study, 77% of the sample used daily newspapers as a medium. This medium accounted for 43% of their budget compared to 27% for radio, 26% for weekly newspapers, 23% for television, and 23% for outdoor. Opposing the myth that local advertisers choose the medium based on cost, this study provided evidence that local decision-makers are most influenced by audience factors that support advertising as a good investment.

An understanding of the difficulties surrounding the image of newspapers among advertising agency personnel led former agency executive Ray Gaulke, vice president of the Newspaper Advertising Bureau, to encourage newspaper advertising representatives to "take on more responsibility ... be tough with clients," and " tell them when they are doing things wrong." He blamed the newspaper industry's slowness to change and its inflexibility and stodginess on the declining image and use of newspapers among national advertisers (Gaulke, 1992). Echoing Cathleen Black, Gaulke called for more realistic pricing and a "one order, one bill" system.

The newspaper industry, having responded to these concerns with price packaging, has allayed some of the advertising agencies' resistance to choosing newspapers as a medium (Jones, 1997). But other issues have not been adequately addressed. Among these findings and observations, one consistent thread emerges: the recognition that newspapers need to be more specifically targeted (Kerwin, 1993a; Kerwin, 1993b; King, et al. 1993; Nowak, et al. 1993; Prater, et al. 1994). Thus, some have called for newspapers to more thoroughly explore marketing segmentation -- to produce differing editions for different segments of readers (Sabolik, 1989).

The concept of marketing segmentation was first introduced by marketing theorist Wendell R. Smith (Smith, 1956). The newspaper industry has not been the only industry late to adopt this concept. "While it may not exactly be news, public relations practitioners and media representatives alike agree that this trend, which began in the 1970s, has contributed to nearly every major development in the print media in this decade and will continue to do so in the next (Sabolik, 1989)."

Target marketing becomes even more relevant as media choices splinter. The task of the media specialist becomes that of media strategist as they have to "identify which media vehicles attract which consumers, and what media patterns those consumers follow through a day or week or month," commented Keith Reinhard, chairman and CEO of DDB Needham Worldwide (Townsend, 1988).

While some regions draw more advertising dollars targeted to the resident population than others, Mike Drexler, a senior advertising executive from Bozell/NYC, said, "I have never seen any advertiser spend in terms of population. They only spend in terms of sales potential for their products (Cassino, 1994)." To increase value, newspapers should prioritize target segments within the mass market (Prater, et al. 1994).

This wake-up call for the newspaper industry was particularly timely in light of the advancements being made by another new medium, the Internet. With subscribers joining one advertising driven, free Internet access service -- NetZero -- at the rate of one every 13.5 seconds, newspapers cannot afford to ignore the value of specific targeting anymore (InfoSeek News, March 17, 1999). NetZero is being promoted as "the first company to provide consumers nationwide completely free Internet access and e-mail while offering advertisers the most sophisticated targeting capabilities available today."

Additionally, NetZero's revenue will be generated through advertising and e-commerce sponsorships. Some of that advertising will come from national advertisers, ranging from Avis to MetLife, which have already begun to localize their marketing using local web sites. Localized, national ads account for about 10% of the revenue for local web sites (Kelsey Group, 1999). But this is expected to change. "By 2003, however, The Kelsey Group forecasts that localized national ads will represent 30 percent of local revenues or between $450 million and $550 million."

Microsoft is only one of many corporations observing the Internet shift from a global to a local focus. Microsoft, for example, has begun to invest heavily in its

"Sidewalk web sites." These sites, targeted toward local residents, do not have newspapers' shortcoming of limited pages. Bill Gates plans on having Sidewalk web sites available in five major U.S. cities by the end of 1999.

Clearly, then, the newspaper industry faces several pressures as it seeks to maintain or increase current levels of advertising revenue. There is pressure as a result of the newspaper industry being in the mature phase of its lifecycle. Because of the industry's age, infrastructure problems with out-of-date systems have caused newspapers to be less flexible than other media. One example of this inflexibility is the fee structure used to charge national advertisers. Another related problem is the misperception held by advertising agency personnel surrounding newspapers' ability to affect sales, share and trial for national advertisers. Pressures also are emerging from new media, which are gaining users at a phenomenal rate and are flexible enough to address very specific target audiences.

Considering these pressures, this study examines senior account management personnel's perceptions and behavior toward newspaper advertising as a medium.

Research questions

The present study addresses four research questions.

RQ1: To what extent are advertising agencies decreasing their reliance on newspaper advertising?

Previous research has found that agencies are decreasing their reliance on newspaper advertising (King, et al., 1997). Our survey examines the degree to which newspapers should be concerned about this trend.

RQ2: What are the main reasons that some agencies are decreasing their reliance on newspaper advertising?

Our survey asks agency executives to rate the significance of several concerns regarding newspaper advertising. The concerns range from the high cost of newspaper advertising to whether their agencies view newspapers as an old-fashioned medium. This series of concerns, then, could identify areas that newspapers should address if they wish to attract advertising clients.

RQ3: Do agencies that have decreased their reliance on newspaper advertising have concerns that differ from those of agencies that have not changed their reliance on newspaper advertising or from those of agencies that have increased their reliance on newspaper advertising?

Agencies that rely on newspaper advertising to differing degrees are likely view newspapers differently as well. Differences across these agencies could highlight important concerns that newspapers will need to address in the future if they hope to stem the tide of decreasing reliance on newspaper advertising.

RQ4: Do concerns about newspaper advertising vary among large, medium and small agencies?

Larger agencies are especially important for newspapers. These agencies, with higher gross billings, offer the potential for more revenue for newspapers than do medium and small agencies. Thus, concerns of large agencies again could highlight areas that newspapers need to address.

Methodology

Data for this study were collected through a mail survey of advertising executives in the United States. Agencies and their addresses were selected from the July 1997 *Standard Directory of Advertising Agencies* using a systematic randomization method. First, a randomly generated set of numbers was used to select a page and an agency on that page. From this starting point, every eighth agency that had at least 10 employees was included in the study. If a selected agency did not meet the criteria, the next agency on the list was used. Surveys returned due to bad addresses and/or executives no longer at the specified agencies were discarded for the study. The selection process generated 432 agencies.

Individual questionnaires labeled "Survey of Advertising Executives" were addressed and mailed in early March 1998 to the selected agency's account manager or an equivalent executive if no account manager was listed. A reminder postcard was sent to the addressees who had not responded two weeks after the initial mailing. Four weeks after the initial mailing, a follow-up letter and another copy of the questionnaire were sent to advertising executives who had not responded. A total of 211 advertising executives responded, for a 49% response rate, an acceptable rate for mail surveys, according to Babbie (1972).

Executives were asked several questions dealing with newspaper advertising. One question asked respondents "Do you have any accounts that utilize newspaper advertising?" Seventeen agencies answered "no" and were not included in subsequent analyses.

A second question asked respondents if their agency is relying more or less on newspaper advertising than in past years. Response categories were: much more, a little more, about the same, a little less or much less. Responses to this question were used to group agencies into those that increased their reliance on newspaper advertising, decreased their reliance on newspaper advertising and did not change their reliance on newspaper advertising.

We purposefully chose to ask about agencies' reliance on newspaper advertising rather than specific dollar amounts for several reasons. We believed a specific dollar amount would not allow for meaningful comparisons across agencies of differing sizes. Is a decrease of $1 million at a small agency less than $50 million at a large agency? Thus, we allowed agencies to estimate their relative reliance upon newspaper advertising in comparison to past years. We also felt it was better to ask agencies about their reliance, an attitudinal measure, rather than usage, a behavior variable, since our other questions dealt mainly with attitudes. Finally, while newspaper advertising revenues are rising, newspaper executives nonetheless are concerned because a large proportion of advertising is going to other media, especially television. Thus, reliance on newspaper advertising, and not actual dollar figures, is the executives' chief concern.

Next, a series of questions examined potential reasons for decreasing newspaper advertising use. Respondents were asked to rate the reasons as not at all important, a little important, somewhat important, very important or extremely important -- a one to five scale. The reasons were: "Your agency feels other media are better at reaching target audience," "Your agency is concerned with high cost of newspaper advertising," "Your agency views newspapers as an old-fashioned medium," "Clients are concerned about decreasing readership rates," "Clients are concerned about demographics of newspaper readers," "Clients are more interested in investing in online communication."

Respondents also were asked to estimate their gross billings in the past year. Responses were used to group agencies into categories of small (under $10 million in gross billings), medium (between $10.1 million and $49.9 million) and large (more than $50 million).

Frequencies were used to address research questions 1 and 2, which examined how many agencies have decreased their reliance on newspaper advertising (RQ1) and their views on the reasons some agencies have decreased their reliance on newspaper advertising (RQ2). Analysis of variance tests were computed for research questions 3 and 4. Here, for RQ3, ANOVAs compared responses for agencies reporting decreases in newspaper ad reliance, increases in newspaper ad reliance and no change in newspaper ad reliance. For RQ4, ANOVAs compared responses for large, medium and small agencies.

Results

Research question one asked the degree to which advertising agencies were decreasing their reliance on newspaper advertising. Table 1 lists the results of our survey. A total of 20.3% of the respondents reported relying on newspaper advertising much less than in the past years, while 28.4% reported relying on newspaper advertising a little less. Thus, nearly half of our respondents reported relying on newspaper advertising less than in past years. On the other hand, only 3.6% responded that they relied on newspaper advertising much more and only 9.1% reported that they relied on newspaper advertising a little more. A total of 38.6% of the respondents reported relying on newspaper advertising about the same as in past years. Clearly, newspaper executives have reason to be concerned about diminishing reliance upon newspaper advertising by ad agencies.

Research question two examined the perceived reasons that some agencies have decreased their reliance on newspaper advertising. Table 2 lists the results of our survey. According to the responses, advertising executives felt the most significant reason for cutting back on newspaper advertising was that other media are better at reaching the target audience. Other important concerns were the high cost of newspaper advertising -- ranked second -- and concerns over demographics of newspaper readers -- ranked third. Less important were decreasing readership rates and clients who are more interested in investing in online communication. The concern cited as being least significant is the view that newspapers are an old-fashioned medium.

Research question three asked whether agencies that have decreased their reliance on newspaper advertising have concerns that are different from those at agencies that have not changed their reliance on newspaper advertising or from those at agencies that have increased their reliance on newspaper advertising. Table

3 shows the mean scores, rankings of the concerns about newspaper advertising and the ANOVA tests.

Only one ranking differed among agency categories. While high cost ranked as the second-highest concern about newspaper advertising for both agencies that increased reliance on newspaper advertising and agencies that didn't change their reliance, high cost was ranked as the fourth most important concern by agencies that cut back on newspaper ads. In other words, the high cost of newspaper ads was a comparatively minor issue for decreased reliance on newspaper advertising by the agencies that actually cut back on their reliance on newspaper ads.

Three of the ANOVAs were statistically significant. Agencies that cut back on newspaper advertising were more likely to think that other media were better at reaching target audiences, that decreasing rates of readership were important and that their agency viewed newspapers as old-fashioned.

Research question four asked whether the concerns about newspaper advertising varied among large, medium and small agencies. The results are shown in Table 4.

Again, only one reason was ranked differently across the three agency groups. Here, concerns about the high cost of newspaper advertising ranked third among small agencies but was ranked second by both medium and large agencies.

None of the ANOVAs were statistically significant. In other words, large, medium and small agencies viewed concerns about newspaper advertising to remarkably similar degrees.

A comparison of newspaper ad reliance by agency size was not statistically significant (Table 5). The results suggest that large, medium and small agencies changed their reliance on newspaper advertising at a similar rate -- mirroring the ANOVA results.

Discussion

The present study examined the apparent decreasing reliance upon newspapers as an advertising vehicle. From responses to our random survey of national advertising executives, several conclusions can be drawn.

Perhaps the most important finding here is the dramatic extent to which agencies have reduced their reliance on newspaper advertising. Nearly half of the respondents (48.7%) reported decreasing their reliance on newspaper advertising either a little or a great deal. In contrast, only 12.7% reported increasing their reliance on newspaper advertising. Newspaper editors' concerns over diminishing advertising dollars (Gaulke, 1992), then, is not without due cause.

The main concern advertising executives stated about newspapers was the difficulty in reaching the target audience with their messages. Indeed, when faced with decisions regarding the clearly defined audiences of more specialized media such as magazines and cable television, advertising executives see newspapers as an inefficient vehicle for carrying their messages to pertinent consumers.

The results suggest two ways of addressing this shortcoming. First, newspapers should attempt to position themselves as a key medium for reaching an important target audience -- namely, local readers. Certainly, newspapers will wage a losing battle on attracting advertising for some products -- say, dog food -- when other media -- such as pet magazines, or the Animal Planet cable network -- provide a more focused audience. And newspapers cannot afford to lose important accounts for all national products.

But newspapers do provide an important source of information that is utilized by concerned citizens, many of whom work and shop in a clearly defined local area. Thus, newspapers may offset national account losses by concentrating more on local clients.

Second, newspapers should attempt to investigate new ways of implementing marketing segmentation. Concerns over reaching target audiences could be lessened if newspaper readers were segmented into more clearly defined audiences.

The results, thus, show support for a recommendation by King et al. (1997) that media specialists look for ways to increase newspaper targeting abilities. If newspapers can target certain audience segments more efficiently, and position themselves as effective vehicles for reaching these target segments, perhaps national advertising dollars will increase.

Targeted newspaper sections, however, have met with mixed success. Hawley and Kreshel (1999) interviewed newspaper staff at the *Arizona Republic* and the *Chicago Tribune* about each newspaper's respective stand-alone women's pages, AZW and WomanNews. Staffers at both papers expected to have great success with these sections. The *Chicago Tribune* considers WomanNews a success even though the section has not attracted large retailers. This failure to attract large retail clients is attributed to the "main news mentality" of the big retailers. Staffers report these businesses continue to want to be in the front sections that they have anchored for so long because readers know to look for them there. Advertisers also told staffers that targeting women wasn't enough. They need the zone editions as well for particular geographic areas.

Concerns about the high cost of newspaper advertising were conflicting. On the one hand, cost is a significant concern for agencies -- ranking second overall after only the problem of reaching target audiences. On the other hand, concerns over cost are apparently not the reason for the decreasing reliance on newspaper advertising among agencies. Agencies that actually have reduced their reliance on newspaper advertising ranked three of the six concerns in our survey above cost: problems reaching the target audience, concerns over reader demographics and concerns about declining readership. Thus, the decreasing reliance on newspaper advertising is due more to concerns over the readers of newspapers than to cost.

The analysis of variance tests point to a similar conclusion. Two of the three significant ANOVAs deal with audience characteristics. Agencies that have reduced their reliance on newspaper advertising voiced stronger concern with problems reaching target audiences and low newspaper readership. Thus, while cost is still a significant concern among all agencies, the consumers actually seeing the ads in newspapers are more important for many agencies.

The third significant ANOVA revealed that agencies that reported reduced reliance on newspaper advertising also were concerned more than other agencies that newspapers are an old-fashioned medium. This concern, however, was still the lowest ranking of the concerns by all agency groups. Thus, while this was a higher concern at agencies cutting back on newspaper advertising reliance, it nonetheless was the least important concern of these agencies. In other words, the image of newspapers is still relatively positive among advertising agency executives.

Also a low concern for agencies was online advertising. Of course, this could change in the future, as more people become wired into the Internet. But the results here suggest that online communication is not yet serious competition for advertising dollars.

While the degree of concern with three of the items varied between agencies that reduced their reliance on newspaper advertising and other agencies, little difference was found here between large, medium and small agencies. Only one concern approached statistical significance: whether agencies viewed newspapers as an old-fashioned medium ($F = 2.79$, $p = .06$). Four of the six ANOVAs did not even produce an F-score of more than 1.0. Indeed, size of agency appears to have little influence on how ad executives view newspaper advertising. This offers newspapers some encouragement. Large agencies, with their bigger budgets, do not view newspapers more negatively than do small and medium agencies. Thus, it follows that newspapers are not more likely to lose accounts from large agencies than from small. On the other hand, however, all agencies, large and small alike, are reducing their reliance on newspaper advertising, as seen in Table 5.

Taken as a whole, the results here suggest that agencies still view newspapers positively, and not as an old-fashioned medium. They also are not viewing online communications as a replacement for newspapers. However, agencies also appear to have concerns about the audiences they will reach through newspaper advertisements. In other words, the newspaper product is still attractive to advertising agencies, but the audiences that newspapers provide are key concerns. Newspapers executives, then, must address concerns over their readership if they wish to attract future advertising dollars.

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Table 1. Frequencies and percentages of responses dealing with agencies' reliance on newspaper advertising as compared to past years (N = 194).

	Number of responses	**Percentage**
Much more	7	3.6%
A little more	18	9.1%
About the same	76	38.6%
A little less	56	28.4%
Much less	40	20.3%

Table 2. Mean scores for how important the reasons are in the decisions of respondents' agencies to cut back on their reliance on newspaper advertising (N = 194).

Concern	Mean	Standard deviation
Other media better at reaching target audience	3.73	1.09
High cost of newspaper advertising	3.11	1.26
Concerns about reader demographics	3.09	1.27
Decreasing rates of readership	2.80	1.25
Investing more in online communication	2.29	1.16
Newspapers viewed as old-fashioned	1.79	0.83

Table 3. Mean scores, reason rankings and ANOVA results comparing agencies that have cut back on newspaper advertising, agencies that have increased newspaper advertising and agencies that have not changed their reliance on newspaper advertising (N = 194).

Concern	**Agencies that have cut back NP ads**	**Agencies that have not changed**	**Agencies that have increased NP ads**	**F-score**
Other media better at reaching target audience	4.02 (1)	3.44 (1)	3.16 (1)	9.92***
High cost of newspaper advertising	3.18 (4)	3.15 (2)	3.04 (2)	1.24
Concerns about reader demographics	3.26 (3)	3.00 (3)	2.96 (3)	1.07
Decreasing rates of readership	3.28 (2)	2.72 (4)	2.28 (4)	10.90***
Investing more in online communication	2.49 (5)	2.10 (5)	2.00 (5)	3.29
Newspapers viewed as old-fashioned	2.09 (6)	1.66 (6)	1.20 (6)	10.05***

* -- p<.05
** -- p < .01
*** -- p < .001

Table 4. Mean scores and ANOVA results comparing concerns about newspaper advertising at large, medium and small agencies (N = 164).

Concern	**Small agencies**	**Medium agencies**	**Large agencies**	**F-score**
Other media better at reaching target audience	3.67 (1)	3.72 (1)	3.57 (1)	0.19
High cost of newspaper advertising	3.12 (3)	3.14 (2)	3.17 (2)	0.02
Concerns about reader demographics	3.26 (2)	2.99 (3)	3.00 (3)	0.83
Decreasing rates of readership	2.98 (4)	2.97 (4)	2.60 (4)	1.14
Investing more in online communication	2.24 (5)	2.27 (5)	1.97 (5)	0.86
Newspapers viewed as old-fashioned	1.97 (6)	1.89 (6)	1.49 (6)	2.79

Table 5. Crosstab results comparing reliance on newspaper advertising at large, medium and small agencies (N = 164).

Newspaper ad reliance	Small agencies	Medium agencies	Large agencies
Agencies that cut back reliance	29	36	16
Agencies that didn't change	24	24	13
Agencies that increased reliance	6	10	6

Chi-square = 1.372, p = .849.

Does good work pay off?

A preliminary study of advertising awards and financial growth.

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Does good work pay off?
A preliminary study of advertising awards and financial growth

Abstract

This study examined whether creative success leads to financial success for advertising agencies. Changes in gross income for U.S. based agencies that were winners of five or more awards given by *Communication Arts* in 1992-1996 were compared to income changes for a matched sample of agencies. Results showed that gross income increased significantly more for agencies that won five or more awards than for the randomly selected comparison group.

Does good work pay off?
A preliminary study of advertising awards and financial growth

In an ideal world, advertising agencies that produced the freshest, most imaginative and effective creative work would receive industry acclaim. Recognition by peers would draw notice from advertisers seeking the agencies' services and these agencies would flourish financially. Does this utopian vision apply to the contemporary advertising agency business in the United States? The following study examines the relationship between acclaim for creative work and growth in agency income over the five-year period from 1992-96.

Studying the quality of agency creative work is important because message formulation is a defining element of the advertising agency, but there are allied reasons as well. Numerous studies have identified an advertising agency's creative work as crucial to 1. advertising effectiveness, 2. the agency selection process, and 3. the agency-client relationship.

Advertising Effectiveness. In an attempt to identify characteristics of effective advertising campaigns, Korgaonkar, Moschis and Bellenger (1984) surveyed 375 advertising agency executives asking them to evaluate a successful campaign conducted by their agency. The authors found that the leading feature of ad campaigns that increased sales was "the message(s) used was unique and creative." In a study of advertising managers, Korgaonkar and Bellenger (1985) reported 98% of managers agreed that successful campaigns were based on "creative and unique" advertising messages.

Agency Selection. Examining the agency selection process, Cagley and Roberts (1985) studied attitudes among Fortune 500 advertising directors and managers and found that concerns about the quality of creative work were important to advertisers regardless of the size of the advertiser firm. Similarly, Wackman, Salmon and Salmon (1986) found in a survey of mid-western advertisers that "In the pre-relationship phase, the client appears to select an agency primarily on the basis of work product factors, especially strong creative...." More recently, Henke (1995) made a longitudinal study of advertisers with annual spending of $5 million or more. She reported, "In the initial stages...the client rates creative skills as the most important agency characteristic and may attend to signs of the agency's creative potential, such as winning of awards or developing high-profile campaigns for well-known advertisers, in making hiring decisions." Helgesen (1994) documented the significance of awards to agency personnel. In interviews of 40 agency management leaders in the top ten agencies in Norway, he found that "All 40 respondents claimed that advertising awards were of importance to the agency business. Out of 58 statements concerning the significance of awards, 25 pointed at status and prestige, 18 at their value as sales arguments, and 6 at their positive effects on staff recruitment."

Agency-Client Relations. In a survey of advertising agencies in the Netherlands, Verbeke (1989) identified the quality of creative work as a crucial variable in maintaining the agency-client relationship. Davidson and Kapelianis (1996) examined agency-client relations in South Africa. Their study suggested that winning advertising awards may be used as a device to signal prospective clients. They reported that there "was a strong relationship between creative awards won and new business growth in the 1993 year (1996:50.)"

In a study of agency switching in New Zealand, Durden, Orsman and Michell (1997) reported that dissatisfaction with the "standard of creative work" was the primary reason leading advertisers gave for switching agencies. This corroborated similar findings in earlier studies in the U.K. and U.S. reported by Michell, Cataquet and Hague (1992.) In a study of 95 Australian advertisers who had changed agencies in the past 18 months or anticipated doing so in the near future, Dowling (1994) found the most frequently cited reason was "the need for new creative ideas." The dominant reason for failing to select an agency was the potential clients' doubt about its creative abilities.

The most comprehensive study to address the relationship between agencies' success in winning awards and financial growth was carried out in Australia by Polonski and Waller (1995). Their study of the top 50 Australian agencies revealed no relationship between award success and growth in either billings or income. However, in a more recent study comparing agency performance in Chile, Japan and the U.S., Griffin, McArthur, Yamaki and Hidalgo (1998) observed based on their literature review, "it is apparent that creative competency is the prime factor affecting the client-agency relationship (1998:65.)" Their findings revealed that their sample of advertisers from three countries rated agency creativity as even more important to client relationships than earlier literature suggests. (1998:70.)

Operationalizing Creative and Financial Success

While the literature seems unequivocal on the importance of advertising agency creativity, the problem arises in defining it. There seems little hope that a single, unambiguous and widely accepted operational definition could be established.

For purposes of this investigation we argue that another measure could be used. The advertising industry gives dozens (one source says over 100) awards for creative work. A list of 17 of the more widely-known awards appears in Table 1. Awards such as the New York Chapter of the American Marketing Association's Effies are unique in being based primarily on measurable marketplace outcomes. Most other awards are given based on creative merit. The more prestigious awards are given annually, have a long history, have a very low ratio of winners to entrants and are judged by accomplished professionals from within the industry. While winning awards may be a flawed measurement of advertising creativity, we argue that, in general and over time, the judgment of practicing professionals should provide a reasonable standard for identifying outstanding creative work.

While an ideal study would investigate many awards competitions over a long period of time, this is beyond the scope and resources for this preliminary investigation. Instead, we chose a single U.S.-based awards competition and tracked it over five years. *Communication Arts* has recognized outstanding work in photography, design and advertising (as well as other fields) for 40 years. We chose *CA Advertising Awards* as a measure of agency creativity for the following reasons:

Recognizes outstanding creative work in all media
Award has stature in the advertising industry
Award is national in scope
Judging by industry professionals
Approximately 2% of entrants receive awards
Collections of winning entries are published annually

For research purposes, the latter point is quite important. A readily accessible and verifiable record of categories and winners is a vital part of a study such as this.

Financial Measures. Measuring agency financial success is not a simple matter. Ideal measures, such as profitability, are not readily available. Indeed, some of the agencies with the best track records in winning awards (Wieden & Kennedy, for example) are privately held, so profitability information is unavailable. Others (e.g., Goodby, Silverstein & Partners) are small parts of large agency holding companies, making it difficult to separate them as an individual financial entity.

Faced with few other choices, we used change in agency income over the five-year period as our measure of financial success. Though not an ideal measure, agency income is reported annually in *Advertising Age.* Agency income is a widely used yardstick of size and success in the industry, and one that needs little explanation.

The research hypotheses, then, are:

H1: Agencies winning many awards will show an increase in agency gross income compared to agencies that win few or no awards.

H2: Agency size (as measured by reported annual gross income) will not affect Hypothesis 1.

Method

As discussed above, our measure of agency creative success was the number of *CA* Advertising Awards won over the five-year period 1992-6. To be judged creatively successful in our study, agencies needed to win five or more awards during the five-year period. Agencies did not necessarily win an award in each of the five years. *CA*'s judging is done by a nine member panel of agency creative personnel, and only slightly over 2% of entries receive awards, making the selection extremely competitive (*CA AA* 38, 12/1997, p. 202.) *CA Advertising Awards Annuals* (1992-1996) were examined, and a list of 41 agencies winning five or more awards for the time period was compiled. Interestingly enough, the top four award winners (Wieden & Kennedy, Fallon McElligott, Goodby Silverstein & Partners and The Martin Agency) accounted for 36% of the awards given by *CA* over the five-year period.

Over the period of study the mean number of awards was ten. The highest number of awards received by a single agency was 82, while seven agencies received five awards.

As discussed above, our study determined financial success based on changes in agency gross income as reported annually by *Advertising Age* (1993, 1997). Though *Advertising Age's* income data are collected by self-report, or estimated by the publication's staff, these data are widely used for comparison purposes. Since our interest was in relative financial success of agencies, the list of 41 award winners was stratified into large, medium and small agencies based on gross income, and a matched sample of agencies in each size category was selected at random. Changes in income between 1992-96 were compared both in terms of percent and dollar amount.

A comparison of the gross income from 1992 for the agencies winning five or more awards and the matched sample showed that the method used here was effective in selecting similar agencies for comparison. An Analysis of Variance examining income in 1992 produced an F-score of 0.030 ($p = .863$). In other words, the gross incomes of the two groups of advertising agencies examined here -- those that won numerous advertising awards and those that won fewer than five -- were nearly identical.

To examine if success in winning awards could predict subsequent increases in agency income, a series of regression analyses were computed to test our hypotheses. First, income was treated as a dummy variable in a regression analysis that used both percentage of increase in income and raw dollar increase in income for all agencies in our study. Thus, increases in income were examined by both the raw dollar increase and the percentage of income increase from 1992 to 1996. This addressed Hypothesis 1. If winning awards indicates future financial success, whether agencies won awards or not should be a statistically significant predictor variable for these two dependent variables.

Next, separate regression analyses were conducted for large, medium and small agencies. Logically, income could increase at different rates for large, medium and small agencies, although our Hypothesis 2 predicted no differences based on agency size.

Results

As Table 2 shows, income for award-winning agencies did increase more than income for agencies that are less successful at winning awards. Income increased 88.2 percent for award-winning agencies compared to 24.9 percent for other agencies. The mean dollar increase was $25.2 million for agencies that won five or more awards and $12.9 million for the other agencies. The differences between winners of five or more awards and the comparison group were statistically significant, as Table 3 shows. Whether an agency won five or more awards was a significant predictor of its future financial success when measured both by percentage of gross income increase and raw dollar increase. The "awards-won" variable explained 11.2 percent of the variance in the percentage change analysis and 11.5 percent of the variance in the raw dollar change analysis. Thus, Hypothesis 1 is supported.

Tables 4 through 6 list the results for regression analyses when the agencies were grouped as "large," "medium" or "small" based on reported gross income. Table 4 suggests that winning five or more awards was not a statistically significant predictor of financial success for large agencies. Among this group, the magnitude of both raw dollar and percentage increases were larger for award-winning agencies (as evidenced by the positive betas) though these values did not reach statistical significance.

As Table 5 shows, the results for the mid-sized agencies were statistically significant ($p = .046$ for percentage increase; $p = .041$ for raw dollar increase). In both cases, the explained variance is 10 percent.

The difference between agencies winning five or more awards and those that did not was most pronounced among small agencies. Here, award-winning was a statistically significant predictor of financial success (see Table 6). If an agency won five or more awards, it was more likely to show a larger raw dollar increase in gross billing ($p = .027$) and a larger percentage of gross billing increase ($p = .018$) than an agency that won fewer than five awards. The "awards-won" variable explained 19.7 percent of the variance in the percentage change analysis and 17.5 percent of the variance in the raw dollars change analysis.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine whether a relationship exists between an advertising agency's ability to win awards for creative work and subsequent increases in gross income. Ideally at least, agencies that win numerous awards should show greater income growth.

Results support this expectation with the following modification: agencies that won five or more awards did report larger increases in gross income than agencies that won few or no awards -- with the exception of large advertising agencies, as measured by gross income. In other words, award-winning campaigns have the greatest influence on subsequent financial success for small and mid-size advertising agencies. Several explanations for this finding are plausible.

Since large agencies have many clients, awards may not necessarily attract much more business. Size alone may demonstrate to clients that the agency is successful, and clients, then, may not view large agencies as more attractive because of the number of awards they win. Large agencies may also have their growth constrained by other factors (client conflicts, for example) and thus may not be able to take on new business despite the fact that the agency wins awards.

Large agencies that won five or more awards and those that won few or no awards experienced an increase in agency gross income during the years measured. While the findings for the large agencies here fell just short of statistical significance, income for large award-winning advertising agencies increased by 38 percent, compared to 1 percent for the comparison group.

The income increase among large agencies could be explained by large clients moving to consolidate their business in a small number of shops, a frequently observed industry trend during the past decade. Large agencies producing award-winning campaigns should enjoy increased client acquisition, client retention or possibly brand assignment growth based on evidence that points to the importance of creative skills to the agency/client relationship (Dowling, 1994; Michell, Cataquet, and Hague, 1992; Michell, 1987). Additionally, clients of large agencies not winning awards may be satisfied with the creative product they are receiving. As Dowling (1994) reported, creative skills are important to clients of large agencies, while winning creative awards was of secondary importance.

Small and mid-sized agencies, by definition, have more room for growth. That is, attracting bigger accounts can allow them to take a step up the size ladder, and a large new account has a significant impact on agency income. Winning awards can draw national attention to small or middle size agencies, making them contenders for accounts outside their region. Absent a strong awards record, these agencies might not be considered viable options by large advertisers. As Helgesen (1994) suggested, in some cases, small and mid-sized agencies use success with awards competitions as a sales argument. Awards also add prestige to an agency. Thus, awards appear to help small and mid-size agencies increase their financial standing.

Several of the small and medium size agencies included in our study have enjoyed national recognition because of the advertising they have created for clients such as The California Milk Processors (Goodby Silverstein & Partners); Nike (Wieden & Kennedy); Timex (Fallon McElligott); Motel 6 (The Richards Group); and Little Caesar's (Cliff Freeman & Associates). The awards, then, may reinforce the successful reputation small and mid-sized agencies have built, thus making them attractive agencies for new clients.

Some limitations of this study might be addressed in the future. First, our study examined results of one awards competition: The *Communication Arts* Advertising Awards. Other indications of agency creative success might be identified. If creative awards are used as indicators, one possibility would be to examine advertising that wins awards from multiple organizations. In addition, other indicators of financial success could be developed. Since agencies that are most successful in winning awards tend to be privately held, obtaining indicators presents some challenges. A study might be designed to focus on new business acquisitions as reported in the trade press. Given our preliminary findings, studying the relationship between creative and financial success seems to hold promise if more precise and comprehensive measures of both these variables can be developed.

Future research could also benefit from a larger sampling frame. A larger number of agencies may have produced more statistically significant results. Finally, the value placed on agency award success by advertisers would be a useful area for future exploration.

Table 1. Major Advertising Awards

1. Advertising Age The Best Awards
(all media)

2. The American Advertising Awards (ADDY Awards)
(major media)

3. The Ad Club of New York (ANDY Awards)
(major media)

4. Clio Awards
(all media & package design)

5. Communication Arts Design and Advertising
(all media)

6. Creative Excellence in Business Advertising Awards (CEBA)
(print)

7. Cresta International Advertising Awards
(all media)

8. DMA International ECHO Awards
(direct media)

9. Effie Awards
(major media)

10. The International Advertising Festival (Cannes)
(major media)

11. Mercury Awards
(radio)

12. Mobius Awards
(major media & packaging)

13. MPA Kelly Awards
(magazine)

14. The New York Festivals
(commercial, film or video)

15. The OBIE Awards
(outdoor)

16. The One Show Awards
(major media)

17. Telly Awards
(commercial, film or video)

Table 2. Means and standard deviations for changes in gross income 1992 to 1996 for agencies that won many awards and agencies that won few or no awards.

	Percentage change Mean	S.D.
Agencies Winning Several Awards	88.2	19.8
Agencies Winning Few Awards	24.6	14.1
	Raw change (in millions) Mean	**S.D.**
Agencies Winning Several Awards	25.2	29.4
Agencies Winning Few Awards	12.9	28.0

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Table 3. Regression analysis results for changes in gross income from 1992 to 1996 at agencies of all sizes.

	Beta	Standardized Beta	T-value	Sign.
Percentage change	.622	.334	3.172	.002

Multiple R: .334
R-square: .112
Adjusted R-Square: .101

	Beta	Standardized Beta	T-value	Sign.
Raw change	.633	.339	3.221	.002

Multiple R: .339
R-square: .115
Adjusted R-Square: .104

Table 4. Regression analysis results for changes in gross income from 1992 to 1996 at large ad agencies.

	Beta	Standardized Beta	T-value	Sign.
Percentage change	.214	.439	1.292	.221

Multiple R: .349
R-square: .122
Adjusted R-Square: .049

	Beta	Standardized Beta	T-value	Sign.
Raw change	.003	.288	1.041	.318

Multiple R: .288
R-square: .083
Adjusted R-Square: .006

Table 5. Regression analysis results for changes in gross income from 1992 to 1996 at mid-sized ad agencies.

	Beta	**Standardized Beta**	**T-value**	**Sign.**
Percentage change	.382	.317	2.06	.046

Multiple R: .317
R-square: .100
Adjusted R-Square: .077

	Beta	**Standardized Beta**	**T-value**	**Sign.**
Raw change	.394	.319	2.044	.041

Multiple R: .319
R-square: .101
Adjusted R-Square: .077

Table 6. Regression analysis results for changes in gross income from 1992 to 1996 at small ad agencies.

	Beta	Standardized Beta	T-value	Sign.
Percentage change	1.234	.444	2.527	.018

Multiple R: .444
R-square: .197
Adjusted R-Square: .166

	Beta	Standardized Beta	T-value	Sign.
Raw change	.021	.419	2.249	.027

Multiple R: .418
R-square: .175
Adjusted R-Square: .143

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Adv

Who We Are and What We Choose to Read:

A Psychological Exploration of Media use

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Abstract

This study expands the advertising literature by demonstrating the usefulness of personality types in identifying patterns of media usage. On a quota sample of the US adult population, ordinal and quasi-interval analyses showed that Introverts used print media substantially more than Extroverts, except for special situations, "Tenderminded Introverts" were the most frequent print media consumers. Discussion addressed the use of this information to improve the cost-effectiveness of media planning.

Advertisers are always looking for ways to improve their understanding of media consumption. Traditional media planning focused chiefly on demographic factors (e.g., age, sex, and race). As a rule, it viewed consumers as passive and reactive, and it measured satisfaction in terms of short-term, easily quantified needs (Rubin, 1984).

More recently, the uses-and-gratifications model gave consumers a more active role: It viewed media use as an anticipatory effort to satisfy somewhat more subtle psychosocial needs (Katz, Blumer, & Gurevitch, 1973; Rubin, 1981, 1983; Rubin & Rubin, 1982). McQuail, Blumer, and Brown (1972), for example, categorized TV-audience gratifications into four types: Those emphasizing *diversion* (escape); *personal relationship* (companionship); *personal utility* (e.g., reality exploration), and *surveillance* (e.g., monitoring government).

Still more recently, Rubin, Perse, and Powell (1985), Finn (1997), and others have examined connections between various personal traits and media use. In particular, Austin (1985), Spitzberg and Canary (1993), Finn and Gorr (1988), and others focused on the trait of social isolation, or loneliness. But as Daly (1987) observed about the interpersonal domain of a decade ago, "Communication research emphasizing personality has had no obvious structure or 'master plan' associated with it" (p.31). Consequently, Finn (1997) and others have recommended greater attention to consumer personality factors.

There exists within the domain of personality measurement a debate about the nature and number of "basic dimensions of personality." Eysenck (1952, 1994) has long advocated a three-dimension model, recently christened the "Giant Three" (Halverson, Kohnstamm, and Martin, 1994). Norman (1963), Costa and McCrae (1994), and Goldberg and Rosolack (1994) have all supported a five-dimension model, now commonly referred to as the "Big Five." Eysenck (1994) proposed that multivariate statistical analysis has gone as far as it can on this topic, that some external criterion is required to settle the issue.

Doyle (1999) has recently proposed a four-dimension model – the "Final Four" – that rests upon external philosophical, psychoanalytic, and neurophysiological criteria. He argues that a four-dimension model better than any other reflects the ancient quaternary of Hippocrates, Galen, and Kant (Sanguine, Melancholic, Phlegmatic, and Choleric), the orthodox psychoanalytic categories espoused by Freud, Adler, Jung, and their followers, and the new neurophysiologically based categories described by Cloninger and others. Figure 1 summarizes Doyle's model and its antecedents.

(Figure 1 is about here).

The four-dimension model is based on the quadrants described by the intersection of two well-studied bipolar dimensions, Introversion/Extraversion (gregarious/withdrawn, after Jung, 1923) and Toughminded/ Tenderminded (masculine/feminine, after James, 1890). Briefly put, Introverted-Toughminded people are withdrawn and rational, thorough and rather picky, while Introverted-Tenderminded people are withdrawn and emotional, nurturing and rather dependent. At the same time, Extraverted-Toughminded people are gregarious and rational, and outgoing and quite interpersonally insensitive, while Extraverted-Tenderminded are gregarious and emotional, and outgoing and relatively interpersonally sensitive. Adopting Merrill and Reid's convenient (1981) nomenclature, we call these types Analyticals, Amiables, Drivers, and Expressives, respectively.

Some uses-and-gratifications studies have addressed one or the other of these basic dimensions. Pearlin (1959) and Olsen (1960), for example, examined the alienation often ascribed to the Analytic, and the loneliness often ascribed to the Amiable, and Arkin (1973) and Rubin (1984) studied information-seeking (Analytic, Driver; that is, Toughminded) and entertainment-seeking (Amiable, and especially Expressive; that is, Tenderminded). Argyle and Lu (1990) distinguished between consumers who use interpersonal communication for greater arousal (Extroverts, especially Expressives) and those who prefer to sit alone reading or listening to music (Introverts, both Amiables and Analytics). Zhongsi and Moy (1998; see also Singer, 1980) proposed that certain characteristics of print media engage the brain in ways that are especially satisfying to Introverts, for example, by giving them a feeling of control of and superiority over the external world (see also Nell, 1988), as well as enable them to avoid the face-to-face communication that often makes them uncomfortable (see also Armstrong & Rubin, 1989).

Accordingly, we hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 1: *Amiables and Analytics are more likely to consume print media than Expressives and Drivers.*

Hypothesis 2: *Expressives and Drivers will spend more time on social activities and social communication than Amiables and Analytics.*

Methods

Sample

We had available the data from the 1995 administration of the Life Styles Survey, a standing panel quota sample of the U.S. adult population sponsored every year by ddb Needham Worldwide, a major advertising firm. In 1995, of the 5,000 surveys send out, usable data were obtained by 3584, a 72% response rate: 1639 males and 1945 females.

Measurement of Personality Type

Using the procedure described in Youn and Doyle (1998; see also Dutta, Fang, & Doyle, 1999), we did principal components analysis on the 58 personality items of the Life Style Survey, eliminating items that showed loading less than .30, and employing a Varimax criterion. To match the four personality types, we forced the extraction of two bipolar factors, which, when the vectors are crossed as Cartesian coordinates, would produce four categories (high vs. low Factor I crossed with high vs. low Factor II, as illustrated in Table 1). Factor I accounted for 33.1% of the variance, with an alpha of .88, while Factor II accounted for 18.2%, alpha .76.

(Table 1 is about here)

Factor I from this analysis corresponds well to the horizontal dimension of the personality framework (Figure 1), and we called it Introversion/Extraversion. Illustrative items include dynamic, winner, and exciting. Factor II corresponds well to the vertical dimension, so we called it Toughminded/Tenderminded. Items include tolerant, friendly, and patient.

(Table 2 is about here)

Next we used standard cluster analysis to form four groups. Table 2 shows the composition, names, and distinguishing items for each cluster. Cluster I (28.8% of the sample) is distinguished by positive loadings on such items as Demanding, High Strung, and Tense; Cluster IV (29.3%) by negative loadings. Cluster II (12.4%) is distinguished by negative loadings on Interesting, Winner, and Self-Confident, Cluster III (29.5%) by positive loadings. These clusters corresponded well with Figure 1. We named them Analytics, Drivers, Amiables, and Expressives, respectively.

Measurement of Outcome Variables

From other parts of the Life Styles Survey, we selected four dependent variables:

<u>Print Media Use</u>. For a variety of magazines, newspapers, and sections of newspapers, respondents were asked to indicate, by means of a checklist, whether or not they "read most/all."

Interpersonal Communication. Respondents were asked to indicate their agreement, on a six-point agree/disagree scale, with the statement: "I spend a lot of time visiting friends."

Social Activity. Respondents were asked to report, on a seven-point scale, how many times in the past year they gave or attended a dinner party. The scale steps ranged from None through 52+.

Media Preference. Respondents were asked to indicate their agreement, on a six-point agree/disagree scale, with the statement: "Magazines are more interesting than TV."

Analysis and Results

Our statistical analysis comprises, on the ordinal level, chi-squareds testing for overall difference in proportions across the four personality types, with visual inspection identifying the specific differences, and, on the quasi-interval level, one-way ANOVAs testing differences in means across the four types, with LSD (least-square difference) contrasts to identify the specific differences. Because media use and personality are intimately associated with gender, we performed all our analyses separately for males and females. We computed chi-squareds or ANOVAs on a variety of magazines, newspapers, and sections of newspapers, and, for convenience, arranged the results by medium within type of results: No difference across personality types (Table 1), Differences in personality type for women but not for men, Differences for men but not for women, and Differences in personality type for both men and women. Additional tables incorporated gender differences.

Table 3 shows cases in which there was no gender difference, and no difference in media use by personality type for either males or females, for either the editorial or the comics section of the respondent's daily newspaper, for *The New York Times,* or for *New Yorker* or *Bon Appetit.* The non-significant gender and personality measures indicate that these media channels are both gender and personality neutral. That is, they are of particularly wide and consistent appeal.

Table 4 shows cases in which there was a significant gender difference, but no difference in media use across personality type for either males or females. Among the many media channels in this table are the sports, magazine, and advertising sections of the respondent's daily newspaper, the *Wall Street Journal, Newsweek, U.S. News,* and *Popular Mechanics,* and *TV Guide, Family Circle, and Women's Day.* The non-significant personality measures indicate that there is no difference within males, and none within females, in the type of person who reads these publications. This means that, although some of these publications are apparently more oriented toward males, and others toward females, there is no personality difference in the types of males or females who read them. Other than being oriented toward men or women, these publications are of very broad appeal.

Table 5 shows cases in which there was no gender difference but a difference in usage across personality types for both males and females. The only three media channels which met these criteria were *Time, Reader's Digest,* and *Modern Maturity.*

Table 5 begins to show the connection between personality type and media usage. Among males, Amiables and then Analytics read *Time* more than either Expressives or Drivers; that is, Introverts more than Extroverts read *Time*. However, Male Drivers read both *Reader's Digest* and *Modern Maturity* more than the other male types, and Analytics read those publications the least. It appears that Male Introverts prefer current events, while Male Drivers prefer what may be lighter, more entertaining, fare. Among females, the pattern is the same for *Time*: Amiables and then Analytics read *Time* more, while Female Expressives and especially Drivers read it less. Female Amiables read *Reader's Digest* most, and Female Analytics read it least.

Table 6 shows cases in which there was a significant gender difference and a difference in usage across personality types for female but not for male readers: *Glamour, Cosmopolitan,* and *Parents.* Table 7 shows parallel data for personality differences among males (but not females): *Field & Stream, PC Magazine, Penthouse,* and *Playboy.* Table 6 repeats the first pattern from Table 5, namely that Introverts, especially Amiables, read these publications more than Extraverts do. The difference between Female Amiables and Female Analytics vanishes when the subject matter becomes gender neutral, i.e., *Parents* magazine. Table 7 for the most part shows the same pattern: that Introverts, especially Amiables, use these publications more than people of the other types, Drivers and especially Expressives less. The chief exception is *Field & Stream,* for which Analytics are the highest-frequency consumers, Drivers the lowest.

Table 8 shows cases in which there was both a significant gender difference and personality differences for both males and females. The media channels include the business and lifestyle sections of the respondent's daily newspaper, *USA Today*, and *Travel* magazine. For the business and lifestyle sections, the pattern is the same for males and females: Amiables read those sections most, Drivers least. For *USA Today* and *Travel*, Amiables are again the highest frequency users, whether among males or among females. The lowest-frequency users of *USA Today* are Male Expressives and Female Analytics.

Finally, Table 9 presents the ANOVA results for the media preference and interpersonal communication items from the Life Styles Survey. For media preference, the overall F is significant at $p<.01$, and the LSD contrasts indicate that the key difference is that Drivers disagree more strongly than the other types with the statement that magazines are more interesting than TV. For interpersonal communication, both ANOVAs were significant at $p<.01$. The LSD contrasts indicate that Drivers and especially Expressives agree more that they spend a lot of time visiting friends, and, at the same time, Amiables and especially Analytics agree less; further that Drivers and especially Expressives agree more that they gave or attended dinner parties in the last year, while Amiables and especially Analytics agree less. As we hypothesized, Extraverts, especially Expressives, seem to gather their satisfaction more from social intercourse than print media, while the reverse appears true of Introverts, especially Amiables. Indeed, there appears to be a ranking of types according to the degree of satisfaction from social interaction to satisfaction from print media: from Expressives to Drivers to Amiables to Analytics. This pattern is consistent with the studies of Finn and Gorr (1988), and Finn (1997) reviewed above.

Implications

Implications of this study for advertisers lie principally in the market-segmentation and media planning arena. For many (but not all) of the media channels sampled here, Introverts, especially Amiables, are significantly more likely to consume print media than Extroverts, especially Expressives. Increased attention to personality type will often result in a more cost/effective media plan.

Such consideration should not only influence budget allocation across different media and vehicles but also the creative strategy to be associated with each. In addition to gender differences in media usage, the predominance of Amiable types in many newspapers and magazines should guide creatives toward strategies possibly different from those currently in use. Doyle (1999) provides more detailed guidance.

In addition, personality type may affect, the the reach, frequency, effective reach and effective frequency values of particular ads. For example, Introverts might need a very low frequency level simply because of their high cognitive involvement in the reading process.

As Finn (1997) predicted, personality type can be one more useful measure in the design of media plans and creative products.

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Figure 1. A Personality Framework

Tough-Minded

<u>Analytics</u>
Freud: Anal
Adler: Controlling
Maslow: Security
Tellegen: Low – Emotionality
Eysenck: + Psychoticism
Cloninger: Harm Avoidance

<u>Drivers</u>
Freud: Phallic
Adler: Ruling
Maslow: Esteem/Strength
Tellegen: High – Emotionality
Eysenck: + Neuroticism
Cloninger: Persistence

Introverted **Extraverted**

<u>Amiables</u>
Freud: Oral
Adler: Pleasing
Maslow: Belonging
Tellegen: Low + Emotionality
Eysenck: - Neuroticism
Cloninger: Reward Dependence

<u>Expressives</u>
Freud: Genital
Adler: Avoiding
Maslow: Esteem/Reputation
Tellegen: High + Emotionality
Eysenck: - Psychoticism
Cloninger: Novelty Seeking

Tender-Minded

Table 1. Illustrative Items from Factor Analysis

Items	Factor 1 (Extroverted vs Introverted)	Factor 2 Tender-minded vs tough-minded
Dynamic	.72	
Exciting	.68	
Winner	.64	
Tolerant		.56
Friendly		.56
Patient		.56

Notes:
Items such as choosy, organized, shy; and researved, humble, feminine, serious are deleted
respectively from their factors due to low loadings (less than .30).

Table 2. Description of Four Clusters of Personalities (Illustrative Items)

Items	Cluster I: Analytic N=895 (28.8%)	Cluster II: Driver N=387 (12.4%)	Cluster III: Amiable N=917 (29.5%)	Cluster IV: Expressives N=911 (29.3%)
Demanding	Least (.47)			Most (-.47)
Vain	Least (.45)			Most (-.26)
Self-centered	Least (.44)			Most (-.39)
High strung	Least (.43)			Most (-.45)
Moody	Least (.31)			Most (-.40)
Tense	Least (.29)			Most (-.36)
Interesting		Most (-.69)	Least (1.07)	
Winner		Most (-.73)	Least (1.00)	
Successful		Most (-.64)	Least (1.01)	
Attractive		Most (-.69)	Least (.79)	
Self-confident		Most (-.67)	Least (1.05)	

Notes: N=3110, with 503 missing.

Table 3. Print media consumption with no differences between genders and personality types within each gender

	Gender Difference	Male × Personality	Female × Personality	% of Total N
Newspaper Section				
Editorial Section	No	No	No	48.6
Comics Section	No	No	No	51.9
Daily Newspapers				
The New York Times	No	No	No	3.1
Magazines				
New Yorker	No	No	No	2.0
Bon Appetite	No	No	No	3.4

Notes:
1. The newspaper and magazine use variables were measured dichotomously with 0= Don't read most or all, 1=Read most or all issues. The cells are the percentage of people within each group who would read all or most of the issues of the magazine.
2. N=3112 **p<.01, *p<.05, two-tailed.

Table 5. Magazine consumption with no gender difference but personality type difference for both male and female

	Male × Personality					Female × Personality				
	Expressive (N=294)	Amiable (N=456)	Driver (N=153)	Analytic (N=487)	χ^2 value	Expressive (N=525)	Amiable (N=400)	Driver (N=194)	Analytic (N=345)	χ^2 Value
Time	8.1	14.5	8.2	10.3	8.58*	8.5	15.5	5.2	11.0	18.05**
Reader's Digest	36.3	40.1	46.7	32.8	7.96*	38.8	46.9	42.2	26.2	37.13**

Notes:
1. The newspaper and magazine use variables were measured dichotomously with 0= Don't read most or all, 1=Read most or all issues. The cells are the percentage of people within each group who would read all or most of the issues of the magazine or the newspaper.. Total
2. N=3112.**p<.01, *p<.05, two-tailed

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Table 6. Magazine consumption with the differences between gender and among personality types of Female readers

	Gender Difference			Female × Personality					Male × Personality
	Male	Female	χ^2 Value	Expressive	Amiable	Driver	Analytic	χ^2 Value	
Glamour	1.1	6.9	51.67**	3.0	12.9	5.1	8.3	34.73**	No
Cosmopolitan	2.4	8.2	40.89**	3.7	13.7	4.5	8.9	34.19**	No
Parent	6.5	16.0	56.6**	11.2	20.6	14.2	20.9	20.75**	No

Notes:
1. The magazine use variables were measured dichotomously with 0= Don't read most or all, 1=Read most or all issues. The cells are the percentage of people within each group who would read all or most of the issues of the magazine or the newspaper.
2. Total N=3112 **p<.01, *p<.05, two-tailed

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Table 7. Magazine consumption with the differences between gender and among four personality types of Male readers

	Gender Difference			Male × Personality					Female × Personality
	Male	Female	χ^2 Value	Expressive	Amiable	Driver	Analytic	χ^2 Value	
Field and Stream	2.9	11.4	81.45**	10.8	8.2	6.7	15.2	10.74**	No
Good House Keeping	4.0	14.2	100.26**	16.2	22.5	14.9	16.8	8.27*	No
PC Magazine	6.9	1.1	51.67**	3.0	12.9	5.1	8.3	34.73**	No
Penthouse	8.2	2.4	40.89**	3.7	13.7	4.5	8.9	34.19**	No
Playboy	5.0	3.0	6.79*	3.7	6.3	2.8	7.7	9.35*	No

Notes:
1. The magazine use variables were measured dichotomously with 0= Don't read most or all, 1=Read most or all issues. The cells are the percentage of people within each group who would read all or most of the issues of the magazine.
2. N=3112 **p<.01, *p<.05, two-tailed

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Table 8. Print media consumption with the differences between gender and among personality types of both gender

	Gender Difference			Male × Personality					Female × Personality				
	Male	Female	χ^2	Expressive	Amiable	Driver	Analytic	χ^2	Expressive	Amiable	Driver	Analytic	χ
Newspaper Sections													
Business	53.0	39.2	66.35**	50.0	58.8	47.6	52.7	8.74*	37.8	45.3	28.5	40.9	18.2
Lifestyle	31.6	63.9	364.11**	29.8	35.4	22.2	33.4	10.18**	64.7	69.1	53.4	67.6	17.5
Dailies													
USA Today	11.4	8.3	8.56**	7.6	15.5	10.3	9.8	12.05**	6.7	12.6	4.6	6.1	17.2
Magazine													
Travel	28.4	36.2	23.91	24.8	34.1	24.2	27.5	10.45**	35.4	42.4	23.2	36.7	23.[illegible]

Notes:
1. The newspaper and magazine use variables were measured dichotomously with 0= Don't read most or all, 1=Read most or all issues. The cells are the percentage of people within each group who would read all or most of the issues of the magazine.
2. N=3112 **p<.01, *p<.05, two-tailed

Table 9. ANOVA results for comparing group means of four personality types by media channel preference, movie going and interpersonal communication

	Extroversion		Introversion		
	Expressives (a)	Drivers (b)	Amiables (c)	Analytics (d)	F Value
Media preference:					
Magazines are more interesting than TV	3.36	3.10_{acd}	3.49_{b}	3.20_{b}	7.06*
Interpersonal communication:					
I spend a lot of time visiting friends	3.35_{bcd}	3.01_{cd}	2.91_{ab}	2.49_{abc}	44.52*
Gave or attended a dinner party[1]	2.52_{bcd}	2.27_{abd}	2.18	1.92_{abc}	24.38*

Notes:

1. The two behavioral variables were measured on a seven-point scale, with 1= none in the past year, 2=1-4 times, 3=5-8 times, 4=9-11 times , 5=12-24 times, 6=25-51 times, 7=more than 52 times. While the rest of variables (attitudinal) were measured on a six-point scale, with 1=definitely disagree, 6=definitely agree.
2. All the cells are mean scores of each personality type for each variable. Means with no subscript do not differ from others at the .05 level according to LSD test. The subscripts a, b, c, d indicate which means are significantly different from each other at the .05 level according to LSD test.

N=3112, **p<.01, *p<.05, two-tailed.

Third-Person Perception, Message Type, Safer-Sex Campaigns, and Sexual Risk-Taking among Minority "At-Risk" Youth

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Abstract

Fifteen years ago, Davison introduced the third-person effect hypothesis, that individuals believe they are less influenced than others by media messages. Although third-person effect is a perceptual bias, Davison believed that individuals act on such misperceptions. Few studies since have tested the behavioral aspect of the third-person effect. In addition, previous studies reporting differences in third-person effect due to message type (i.e. PSAs vs. advertisements) controls to isolate the effects of message type from content and context. The current study sought (a) to document third-person effect among minority "at-risk" youth within the context of safer sex messages, (b) to determine the differences in third-person effects (if any) between PSAs and advertisements with similar content, and (c) to determine the link (if any) between third-person effect and risky sexual behaviors among youth. Findings indicate that third-person effect is an appropriate framework for understanding how "at-risk" youth perceive safer sex campaigns. The study also extends the behavioral aspect of third-person hypothesis by linking it with sexual risk behaviors among 'at-risk" youth. No difference in third-person effect was found as a result of different message types. Relevance of the current findings to the broader areas of health communication and message effects is discussed.

Third-Person Perception, Message Type, Safer-Sex Campaigns, and Sexual Risk-Taking among Minority "At-Risk" Youth

Do adolescents attend to and benefit from safer sex messages? Despite exposure to a multitude of media campaigns, adolescents continue to take sexual risks (CDC, 1997; Donovan, 1997; Nduati & Kiai, 1997). The World Health Report (1998) indicates that 590,000 children and adolescents became infected with HIV in 1997. The report describes HIV/AIDS as one of the biggest 21st-century hazards to children. Although knowledgeable about the transmission of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and AIDS (David & So-kum Tang; Nduati & Kiai, 1997), adolescents have not changed their sexual behaviors accordingly (Bok & Morales, 1997; CDC, 1997; David & So-kum Tang, 1997).

Third-Person Perception

The third-person perception (Davison, 1983), the misperception that others are more affected than oneself by media messages, offers an appropriate framework for understanding how adolescents perceive safer-sex campaigns. Davison's conception of the third-person effect included two elements: (a) individuals expect communication to have a greater effect on others than themselves, and (b) the expected impact of communication on others may lead to action by oneself in anticipation of the effect on others. For instance, Salwen (1998) found that adults believe others are more influenced than themselves by election campaign messages. This perceptual bias was found to predict support for restrictions on campaign messages. The vast majority of third-person perception studies used adult samples. The applicability of such findings to adolescents is not yet established.

Adolescents have shown resistance to public service announcements due to the stigma associated with social marketing, the use of marketing techniques to "sell" ideas instead of products. This reaction is evident in Duck and Mullin's (1995) study of Australian adolescents and a social marketing campaign designed to discourage drinking and driving. Study participants, critical of being told what to do said things like, "Who'd want to be influenced by those kinds of messages? They're nerdy!" (p. 85). It may be the case that adolescent audiences disregard safer-sex campaigns because such messages are socially undesirable in reference to peer norms which value pleasure over condom use (Fisher, Misovich & Fisher, 1992). If this is the case, recent advertising campaigns for condoms and home HIV test kits may actually elicit the third-person perception to a lesser degree than PSAs. Advertisements simply sell products without the moral messages adolescents associate with PSAs.

The purposes of this study include the following: (a) documenting third-person perception among "at-risk" youth, (b) determining the differences (if any) in third-person perception elicited by PSAs vs. advertisements with similar content, and (c) determining the link (if any) between third-person perception and sexual risk-taking. A sample of minority "at-risk" youth were used because they are frequently the target audience for safer-sex campaigns, yet have been neglected by the majority of third-person perception studies.

<u>First-Person Perception</u>

Numerous studies document a "first-person effect" (Atwood, 1994; Duck & Mullin, 1995; Innes & Zeitz, 1988). The first-person perception occurs when individuals believe they are <u>more</u> likely to be affected by the media than are others. In this case, individuals believed they would be more influenced by the drinking and driving messages than "the average person." The first-person perception is most likely to emerge when individuals believe a message is socially desirable to peers (Atwood, 1994; Duck & Mullin, 1995; Innes & Zeitz, 1988).

The first-person perception is an important concept because not all pro-social messages are acceptable to peer groups. For example, Innes and Zeitz' (1988) adult audience indicated being influenced by drunk driving PSAs (a first-person effect) because they perceived the message to be socially responsible, but Duck and Mullin's (1995) adolescent audience reported no influence of drunk driving PSAs (a third-person effect) because the same topic was considered "nerdy" to that peer group.

Predicting Third-Person Perception

The majority of third-person perception studies have used negative messages (defamatory news coverage, negative political advertisements, and pornography). Perloff (1993) criticizes this over-reliance on negative messages, stating that confidence in research findings would be greatly increased if third-person perception emerged from pro-social messages. Since the review's publication, Duck and associates (1995) studied Magic Johnson's public statement about his HIV status, and Duck & Mullin (1995) studied televised drinking and driving messages, both finding that positive messages elicit the first-person perception. The current study also addresses Perloff's critique by studying third-person perception in the context of prosocial messages.

Hoorens and Ruiter (1996) argue that the third-person perception is only relevant for socially undesirable topics. Individuals believe they are more influenced by messages that are "good" to be influenced by (socially), while "others" are more influenced by messages that are "bad" to be influenced by (Gunther & Mundy, 1993; Hoorens & Ruiter, 1996; Price, Huang, & Tewksbury, 1997).

Message Type

The traditional mass media (radio, television and print media) differentiate between types of messages in format, clearly demarcating advertisements, news, entertainments, and public service announcements (Straubhaar & LaRose, 1997). Two message types that have been shown to predict differences in third-person perception are public service announcements (PSAs) and advertisements (Duck & Mullin, 1995; Gunther & Thorson, 1992; Innes & Zeitz, 1988). Gunther and Thorson attribute such differences to social desirability: PSAs about non-controversial topics take positions generally acceptable to the majority of the audience, but advertisements interrupt TV programs with messages about products that people may dislike or have no interest in.

While several studies (Duck & Mullin, 1995; Gunther & Thorson, 1992; Innes & Zeitz, 1988) demonstrated variance in third-person perception as a result of message type, the results are confounded by content (positive vs. negative), context (comparing cakes to gasoline and Greenpeace to drinking and driving campaigns), and message type. All three studies relied on convenience samples, and two relied on their college students who may or may not have been appropriate target audiences of the messages. The current study seeks to avoid these issues by using only pro-social messages with similar content (persuading people to get tested for HIV). Minority "at-risk" youth are an appropriate target audience for the messages and have been neglected in previous studies.

Third-Person Perception and Risk Taking

Although third-person perception is a theory of perceived influence, it posits that individuals act on their perceptions. Condom use is better predicted by perceived risk (Brickner, Lawton, & Philliber, 1987) and sexual attitudes (Serovitch & Greene, 1997) than by actual risk.

From the first decade of third-person perception research, Perloff (1993) concluded that mild support (at best) had been provided to link third-person perception to behavior. Mutz (1989) and Griswold (1992) found support for the behavioral hypothesis, but Gunther (1991) did not. As third-person effect research approaches the mid-point of its second decade, five more studies have tested behavioral hypotheses. Morwitz and Pluzinski (1996) found that individuals who perceived being influenced by public opinion polls (first-person effect) were more likely to change their vote than were those who perceived others as being more influenced than themselves (third-person effect). Using the O.J. Simpson trial and coverage as context, Salwen and Driscoll (1997) reported a relationship between third-person perception, assumptions about O.J.'s guilt, and willingness to restrict the press. Subjects exhibited a strong third-person effect, assuming others were more influenced by trial coverage than they were. However, the assumption of OJ's innocence was also required to predict support for press restrictions. Three additional studies (McLeod, Eveland, & Nathanson, 1997; Rojas, Shah, & Faber, 1996; Salwen, 1998) reported a relationship between third-person perception and the willingness to censor the media.

Extending the Behavioral Hypothesis

The basic assumption stated in the first third-person perception hypothesis, the belief that one is less influenced by the media than others, may be conceptualized in two ways: individuals overestimate the influence of communication on others, or underestimate the influence of communication on themselves Perloff (1993). Similarly, the current study seeks to extend the concept by suggesting that Davison's (1983) behavioral hypothesis also has a second dimension. Just as individuals take action based on their perception of the media's influence on others, they may also fail to take self-protective action based on the perception that media messages have no influence on them. A common example of this would be a smoker who reaches for a cigarette after viewing an anti-smoking PSA. Similarly, the perception that HIV/AIDS messages have no influence on oneself may lead "at-risk" youth to the conclusion that such messages are "not for them;" thus, adolescents may fail to attend to such messages and neglect to take self-protective measures when engaging in sexual behaviors.

This study seeks to contribute to existing knowledge and to extend the behavioral hypothesis by exploring the relationship between perceived influence of safer-sex messages and sexual risk taking among "at-risk" youth. The establishment of a second dimension to the behavioral hypothesis extends the relevance of third-person perception research to the broader areas of message design and message effects. For instance, standard measures for recall and recognition of messages (advertisements, PSAs, song lyrics, etc.) and measures for attitude change are all significantly impacted by attention to the messages themselves.

Hypotheses

Concerning the existence of the third-person perception among minority, "at risk" youth, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 1: Individuals believe they are less influenced than others by televised safer-sex messages.

Concerning the influence of message type on third-person perception, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 2: The third-person perception will be greater for PSAs than for advertisements.

Concerning the relationship between third-person perception and risk-taking, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 3: Adolescents exhibiting higher degrees of third-person perception will be more likely to report having unprotected (without a condom) sex ("even once"), will report having unprotected sex more frequently in the past 30 days, and will be more likely to report the intention to engage in future sexual activity than students exhibiting less or no third-person perception.

Method

Subjects.

Subjects were 177 adolescents ranging in age from 8 to 17 (M = 12.1, SD = 1.9). All of the students were enrolled in three programs servicing "at-risk" youth in urban New Jersey. The sample was 54% female and 92% African-American. Most students were enrolled in a middle-school program (63%), fewer in a high-school program (20%), and the fewest in an elementary-school program (17%)

Materials.

Various procedures for measuring third-person perception appear throughout the literature. The measure in this study was adapted from Duck and Mullin (1995). Study participants were exposed to four 30 second safer-sex televised messages described below:

> Advertisement 1: (Confide). Latin female is shown shopping with a friend and later calling Confide for her HIV test results. The slogan (and focus) of the message is "it's time to know."
>
> Advertisement 2: (Confide). Latin male is shown in his car and at work. He calls Confide from home for his HIV test results. The slogan (and focus) of the message is "it's time to know."
>
> PSA 1: (New Jersey Network). Latin female appears in the waiting room of a clinic awaiting her HIV test. She's not sure of her partner and fears she may have been infected. The slogan (and focus) of the message is "it's better to know than to be left in the dark."
>
> PSA 2: (NJN). African-American woman is shown in a local park pushing her child on a swing. The narrator talks about the prevalence of HIV/AIDS among minority women and children. The final shot is the empty swing reinforcing that anyone can get AIDS.

Both of the public service announcements were preceded by the New Jersey Network logo to assist students in identifying them as public service announcements. The advertisements were being broadcast on commercial television during the study period. The PSAs had been broadcast on the New Jersey Network over the past three years. The messages featured young female minority spokespersons which (a) contradicts the stereotype that HIV/AIDS is a gay male problem and (b) likely increases the relevance to the study sample. The use of African-American spokespeople would have been more relevant to the sample; however, no *Confide* materials featuring African-American females were available at the time of the study.

After viewing the messages (in varied order), participants answered questions in the form of: "How much do you think _____ (you, other students in the USA) would be influenced by messages like this?" Responses were in the form of Likert-type scales ranging from "not at all" to "extremely influenced." To test the relationship between third-person perception and risk behavior, a composite measure was created by (a) subtracting the assessment of perceived influence on self from perceived influence on others, and (b) combining the self/other comparisons for all four messages. This method is consistent with existing research (e.g., Duck & Mullin, 1995).

A measure of adolescent risk-taking was also utilized to collect information about sexual activity. Students indicated if they had ever had sex with or without a condom, how many days in the past 30 days they had engaged in either of those behaviors, and if they intended to engage in sexual activity before completion of high school. Questions about current sexual activity were eliminated for the students in grades 4 and 5.

Procedure.

Data was collected from the children during normal program meeting times on two occasions. Parents and children were briefed at a mandatory program orientation meeting, during which parents signed consent for their child (ren) to participate in the study. Ninety-eight percent of the parents invited consented to the study. Before Session 1, the students were briefed and asked to sign an additional consent letter. Program staff offered another activity for students who did not wish to participate. Ninety-eight percent of the students invited consented to participate. Program counselors were available during each session, but the students used none. All students viewed the first two messages in varied order, completed the third-person perception measure, and provided demographic information. Five months later (Session 2), students were exposed to the last two messages, completed the third-person perception measure, and responded to the risk-taking survey. Approximately 30% of the students left their respective programs between Session 1 and Session 2, resulting in a lower N for some analyses.

Results

Hypothesis 1 predicted that individuals would believe they were less influenced than others by televised safer-sex messages. The positive mean for third-person perception ($M = .61$, $SD = 1.6$) indicates that as a group, this was the case. Students exhibited third-person perception, believing they ($M = -.24$, $SD = 1.4$) were less influenced than others ($M = .47$, $SD - 2.1$) by the safer-sex messages, t (169) = -4.6, $p <$ .001. Specifically, 62.4% of the students exhibited classic third-person perception (perceived themselves to be less influenced than other students in the USA by the safer-sex messages), 31.3% exhibited first-person perception (perceived themselves to be more influenced than other students in the USA by the messages), and 6.3% perceived no difference between themselves and other students in the USA in terms of perceived message influence. Hypothesis 1 was supported.

Hypothesis 2 predicted variance in third-person perception due to message type. Contrary to the prediction, there was no difference in third-person perception with respect to PSAs vs. advertisements used during Session 1, t (169) = -.25, $p = .80$, or Session 2, t (128) = 1.67, $p = .10$. The predicted difference also failed to emerge after controlling for age, gender, and program group. Hypothesis 2 was not supported. Instead, the degree of third-person perception was highly correlated across all four messages, $\alpha = .60$. Previous findings confounded message type with content and context; thus, this study was one of the only to isolate message type as a predictor of third-person perception. The lack of findings here suggests that conclusions about message type made previously should be re-examined and interpreted with caution.

Hypothesis 3 predicted a relationship between third-person perception and risk-taking. Specifically, it was predicted that adolescents exhibiting higher degrees of third-person perception would be more likely to report having unprotected (without a condom) sex ("even once"), would report having unprotected sex more frequently in the past 30 days, and would be more likely to report the intention to engage in future sexual activity than students exhibiting less or no third-person perception.

Slightly more than 25% of the students reported having unprotected sex at least once. The average age of sexually active students was 12. Consistent with the prediction, a small positive relationship was found between third-person perception and unprotected sex; however, only 10% of the variance in unprotected sex was explained by the third-person effect. Fourth and fifth grade students were not asked about past or present sexual activity, so this finding was based on an N of 96 students. Given a larger sample, a stronger relationship may have been established.

There was no relationship between third-person perception and protected sex (with a condom), frequency of sexual experience in the past 30 days, or intention to engage in sexual activity in the future. Slightly more than 30% of the students reported having protected sex at least once. About 25% also reported having sex at least once (with or without a condom) in the past 30 days. Less than 10% reported having sex weekly during the past month. As to intent to engage in sexual activity in the future, 46.7% said they would "definitely not" be having sex in high-school, and an additional 17.2% said they would "probably not" have sex during high-school. The remaining

36.1% that stated they would "probably" or "definitely" have sex in high-school does not represent much of an increase from the 30% already sexually active.

Discussion

The hypotheses tested in this study related to several purposes: (a) documenting third-person perception among minority "at-risk" youth, (b) assessing the influence of message type on the degree of third-person perception, and (c) testing the behavioral component of third-person effect by gauging the relationship between third-person perception and sexual risk-taking.

While the third-person perception is well documented in the literature today, few previous studies included middle school and/or high school students, and fewer still studied minorities. The neglect of adolescents the literature is especially problematic within the context of safer-sex campaigns because experimentation with sex is beginning and the formation of lifelong habits is occurring during this time period (Fleming, 1996; Udry & Billy, 1987). The over-reliance on Euro-American samples is problematic as well because adolescents of different races and cultural backgrounds initiate sexual behaviors at different times and for different reasons (Udry, 1988; Udry, Billy & Morris, 1985). This study sought to rectify these problems by selecting minority "at-risk" youth as a sample. Students in the sample exhibited a classic third-person perception, believing themselves to be less influenced by televised safer-sex messages than were others. Support was found for hypothesis 1, indicating that third-person perception is an appropriate framework for understanding how youth perceive public health campaigns.

It is important to note that not all of the students exhibited classic third-person perceptions. Nearly one third exhibited first-person perception, believing themselves to be more influenced by the messages than others. While it is not possible to explain such differences from the current data set, they are a strong indication of cultural differences in third-person perception that should be the focus of further research.

Although numerous studies found variation in third-person perception by message type, differences between advertisements and PSAs disappeared with more precise controls in the current study. Further research should confirm this finding and use negative content and other contexts to support or reject the current findings.

Finally, risk-behaviors may be looked at in terms of experience with a hazard or as a result of perceptual bias. In what little is known about the behavioral aspects of third-person perception, experience has consistently been shown to predict the strength of the effect. For instance, Atwood (1993) reported that for adults, experience with earthquakes *decreased* third-person perceptions, while frequent exposure to earthquake predictions resulting in no earthquake *increased* third-person perceptions.

Each of the studies finding a relationship between third-person perception and experience assumed that experience with a hazard has an impact on third-person perception. Because longitudinal data was collected for the current study, the opposite direction may also be considered; perhaps the initial perceptual bias (third-person perception) resulted in experience with a hazard (in this case, more students having unprotected sex). Additional links must be explored to further consider this possibility: (a) After making the assessment that one is less influenced by safer-sex messages, do individuals pay less attention to such messages under the assumption, "this is not for me"? (b) If one makes such an assumption, would it not follow that individuals forfeit the benefits of the messages? Additional data from the continuation of the current study and others like it may both confirm the behavioral aspect of third-person perception and the direction of that effect.

It is only through this new line of inquiry that third-person perception research becomes more relevant to the broader areas of mass communication effects and public health campaigns. Uncovering the unexplained link in the current study between third-person perception and increased sexual risk-taking among minority adolescents has great potential to inform message design for specific health behaviors among "at-risk" youth, as well as contributing to the larger literature on message effects. A promising direction for future research is the possible link between third-person perception, attention to messages, and behavior.

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An exploratory study of the synergy among ad attention, promotional offers and the use of grocery buyer cards in building customer loyalty

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An exploratory study of the synergy among ad attention, promotional offers and the use of grocery buyer cards in building customer loyalty

This study measures the impact of having a grocery card on using advertising and responding to promotions on shopping habits and customer loyalty. A statewide survey of 589 adults found that, while heavy users of grocery cards do pay more attention to advertising and plan shopping to take advantage of advertised specials and promotions, this behavior does not result in loyalty to the store as defined by regular shopping.

An exploratory study of the synergy among ad attention, promotional offers and the use of grocery buyer cards in building customer loyalty

More than 28 percent of grocery store chains in the U.S. offer buyer or frequent shopper cards, enabling both the development of customer shopping databases and the ability to target customers with specific offers in key areas. An additional 33 percent of stores intend to introduce these programs (Ross, 1998). Closely allied are the advertising and coupon offers that promote special discounts available only to preferred, card-holding customers. These frequent shopper programs are becoming entrenched in the supermarket industry.

All of this activity represents a move by grocery retailers to build customer loyalty, to increase frequency of shopping in one particular store or chain of stores and to target advertising and promotions with more precision. Price discounts, specials, contests, buy one – get one free weekly promotions, and gifts of food and vouchers for shopping a certain number of weeks in a given time frame all may be part of the promotional mix. By its nature, good promotion involves a number of differing rewards. At their best, promotion and advertising provide a synergy for effective marketing. Through these means, retailers hope both to gain market share over competitors and to regain the local power over customer buying habits that national advertisers usurped in the late 19th Century with the proliferation of national brands and related national advertising (Rotzoll and Haefner, 1996).

A frequent buyer program differentiates customers providing rewards based upon behavior; the most loyal customers stand to gain the greatest rewards. Early buyer programs simply gave buyers a card that entitled them to discount prices on certain items or to coupons designed for their individual shopping behaviors. More advanced buyer programs reward for frequency as well.

An underlying assumption is that the cards, associated advertising and related promotions accomplish these goals. Customers are assumed to read ads, check special promotions targeted at them and shop regularly at the store for which they hold the card. This is particularly salient for a business dominated by the dual factors of price and convenience, in which there are low margins, low consumer involvement, and low risk, and one which involves habitual buying behavior, often one or more times a week. In his classic study on advertising and competition, Backman (1967) has pointed out that low cost, low risk, low involvement products such as many of those found in supermarkets, need to be advertised frequently. Further, these products are available from a variety of vendors. Multiple marketers of low-involvement products generally find it effective to use price and sales promotions as an incentive to product trial, but the long-term effect on behavior is less clear. In fact, we know little about the impact of these programs on actual buying behavior. The intent is clearly to induce repeated shopping behavior and, ultimately, store loyalty. The unanswered question is the extent to which these programs work (Schultz, 1998).

This purpose of this study is to measure the impact of having a grocery card on using ads and responding to promotions and on shopping habits. Grocery card usage is an increasing behavior across the country (and in many Western European countries as well). Very little is known about the relationships between holding a card, regularity of shopping, customer response to store promotions, store-switching and use of multiple cards or store loyalty factors. A statewide survey of 589 adults provided the opportunity for an assessment of the question: Do grocery loyalty cards succeed in doing what they are designed to do? As importantly, this study measures possible synergy between ad attention, participation in promotions and store loyalty as defined by regular shopping.

Two theories are appropriate for this work. The first, involvement theory, has been used in a variety of studies, primarily related to product class, brand and purchase decisions (Hovland, 1957; Krugman, 1967; Petty, Cacioppo and Schumann, 1983). Zaichkowsky (1986) states that there is an underlying theme focusing on personal relevance in the literature on involvement. Relevance is defined in terms of the receiver of a message being personally affected and hence motivated. It follows that the cardholder may engage in some level of external information search regardless of the fact that the individual products advertised are low risk and low price.

A second relevant theory is uses and gratifications theory (Katz et al, 1973) incorporating expectancy-value theory (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). Uses and gratifications theory would predict that customers choose the combinations of attributes that offer the greatest reward for their effort. Although most uses and gratifications work has been in the area of media choice, this theory, which assumes an "active" audience, making conscious choices could well be used in a grocery buyer situation. Expectancy-value theory assumes behavior or intention (in our case, buying intention) to be a function of the belief that a behavior will have an effect on gratifications sought. Grocery cardholders might be expected to have a positive relationship for the store or stores for which they hold the card, and they might be expected also to be searching more actively for information. Thus, they would be expected to report higher or more frequent attention to advertising. It is reasonable to think that they would continue to shop regularly at the store that offered them these values.

Literature Review

Three areas of literature are pertinent to this study: attention to advertising and use of promotions and store loyalty.

Attention to Advertising

Attention to advertising has been a fertile area of study for advertising researchers. Krugman (1988) has argued that consumers can pay attention to an advertisement, forget the ad, and then perhaps "recall" the ad when the information is needed later on. Anderson et al (1986) argued that, as people grow older, they pay less attention to particular media and the advertising within them. Thorson, Fiestad, and Zhao (1987) found that if a respondent had chosen to watch a television show, he would pay more attention to the subsequent commercials than if he had not chosen the show. Swenson (1994) found that if a prospect (someone interested in the product advertised) viewed an ad, she would pay more attention to the ad than if the person were a non-prospect. These studies point to the many obstacles advertisers face when trying to persuade consumers to pay attention to their ads.

Advertising attention within newspapers is potentially complicated by the very structure of the medium. With typically two-thirds of newspaper content as advertising, the clutter factor makes getting attention for ads difficult. Speck and Elliot (1997) stated that newspapers have characteristics that provide a unique environment for consumers that allows them to ignore the advertising. Since grocery stores depend on newspapers to alert consumers of weekly specials, they need to look for new ways to entice consumers to read the advertising on a regular basis.

Although a plethora of studies about attitudes toward advertising exist, the ways in which grocery store customers use advertising has been largely ignored. This is particularly noteworthy given the amount of newspaper space taken up by grocery story advertising. A Newspaper Association of America study (Fisher, 1994) found that shoppers prefer newspaper ads over direct mail approaches, but they did not investigate what the shoppers' attitudes in general were to newspaper advertisements or how much time or attention is paid to them. Raj (1982) found that loyal customers bought more products when they saw coupons for their brands. This finding could be extrapolated to store promotional offers as well. Kelly, Huefner and Hunt (1991) surveyed 2319 retail shoppers to ascertain their use of free-standing inserts in the newspaper. Their findings indicate that more than half who received the newspaper had seen the ads and that 65 percent of those read most of the ads. Sixty percent reported that they had looked at the ad because of a specific item they wanted.

Much of the research on attention indicates that readers are willing to pay attention if information is offered that is of particular interest. Hence, it would seem that those shoppers who were in a position to take advantage of special prices and promotions by virtue of having a grocery card would pay special attention to the advertising to find these savings. They may be more likely to be price sensitive and therefore more involved in the process of attending to advertising.

Promotions

Most literature concerning promotions at the grocery store level is that of promotions between the manufacturer and the retail store. Little has been written on promotions to customers. What has been written on grocery promotions has largely dealt with price elasticity. These studies offer conflicting findings. For example, in a study using 52 weeks of scanner data and the records of a large supermarket, Walters and Bommer (1996) concluded that factors such as brand market share and price had significant impact on elasticity, but that the promotion factors of price specials did not. In a study of brand price elasticity across markets (rather than across time), Bolton (1989) investigated the market characteristics associated with differences in brand price elasticity for frequently purchased nondurables. She found that market characteristics such as brand market share, couponing, display activity and feature activity explained a substantial amount of the variance.

Kumar and Leone (1988) used an econometric approach to study store substitution behavior in the presence of price promotion and found that consumers will change stores to take advantage of a special price.

The 1998 A.C. Nielsen Annual Frequent Shopper Program study found that consumers consider the grocery cards more important than every day low pricing or customer service. The study reported that having a grocery card was the third factor affecting grocery choice, behind store location and store deals. Seventy-five percent of the respondents said that saving money was the top reason for using a grocery card.

Finally, a study of over 16,000 customers of a large supermarket chain (Sirchi, McLaughlin and Wittink, 1998) found that perceived value for money was found to hinge on perceived relative price and sales promotions perceptions. Having a grocery card would seem to promote both of these.

Store Loyalty

The area of store loyalty has been the subject of much research. The central thrust of marketing activities is often viewed in terms of building and maintaining consumer loyalty. Although most marketing research on loyalty has focused on brand loyalty, store loyalty is perhaps the singular most important concept for retailers. In the present environment of increasing retail competition and market maturity conditions in supermarket profit (Progressive Grocer Annual Report, 1996), the task of managing store loyalty has emerged as a focal managerial challenge (Dick and Basu, 1994).

According to a summary (Tigert and Arnold, 1981) of 14 different retail food store studies, locational convenience and low prices were clearly the two most important attributes for consumers in choosing the store where they shopped the most. This finding was supported in a 1983 study (Arnold, Oum and Tigert) that also found the convenience of location and low prices were the top-ranked attributes across six markets, times and cultures. Since the card ensures lower prices and is needed for access to special store promotions, which are also money saving tools, it would seem that having a grocery card would make the holder more eager to shop at the store on a regular basis. The factor of importance of privacy in mitigating card usage is yet to be explored, but will be in the follow-up study.

However, another series of studies indicate that holding a grocery card may not lead to store loyalty. Dowling and Uncles (1997) argued that card programs have little to do with building long-term customer loyalty but everything to do with building promotion loyalty or loyalty to discounts and deals. Trade magazines have pointed out that a grocery card doesn't influence customer loyalty (Garrett, 1998; Lewis, 1998; Smith, 1997). Critics of grocery cards have observed that consumers carry more than one grocery card (Conley, 1998). In a given market where there were two grocery cards, heavy shoppers usually had both of them (Lewis, 1998). Smith (1997) expressed this phenomenon as "consumers' loyalty card game." However, when a store offers promotions that require weekly shopping at a certain level to qualify for premiums or bonus gifts, more regular shopping and related store loyalty might be expected.

Hypotheses

Three hypotheses are derived:

H_1 Heavy users of grocery cards will pay more attention to grocery advertising than will light users who hold or non-holders.

H_2 Heavy users of grocery cards are more likely to plan their shopping to take advantage of promotions than will light users or non-holders.

H_3 Heavy users of grocery cards are more likely to shop regularly at the store(s) for which they hold the cards than will light users or non-holders.

Method

A statewide survey of 589 adults provided the opportunity to ask questions concerning card membership, attention to advertising, participation in store promotions and frequency of shopping at various stores. This effort is the initial part of a larger study on buyer loyalty cards. To test our assumptions, we were able to embed our questions in a larger, multipurpose statewide study that dealt with a variety of issues including voter behavior, attitude toward utilities and other issues. Although we were only allowed four questions on this survey, there was also a cohort of demographic questions and media use questions that were useable in our study. These included age, income, marital status, employment, education, race and daily use of media. A pre-test was conducted in early October to refine the survey questions. The complete statewide poll was conducted between October 19 and 30, 1998. A sample of 589 adults was interviewed by telephone with the numbers chosen by random sampling of all possible numbers. The sampling error is plus or minus 4.5 percent for the total sample. The unit of analysis was the individual respondent. Dependent variables were attention to advertising, planning grocery shopping to take advantage of promotions and shopping regularly at the same store. Independent variables were having a grocery card and the overall survey demographic variables.

For this initial work, the assumption was made that there would be a relationship between reading ads, participation in store promotions, use of the store buying card and ultimately, regular shopping at the store where the card was held.

Initial measures of association were examined using Pearson correlation. Crosstabs were used to determine demographic categories associated with advertising attention and taking advantage of promotions.

Following this, a hierarchical regression procedure was employed to determine if the addition of grocery card usage improved the prediction of three dependent variables beyond that afforded by differences in some demographics. Multivariate outliers among the independent variables were sought using Mahalanobis distance. Mahalanobis distance is distributed as a chi square (χ^2) variable, with degree of freedom equal to the number of independent variables (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996). To determine which cases are multivariate outliers, one looks up critical χ^2 at the desired alpha level. In this case, critical χ^2 at $\alpha = .001$ for 6 degrees of freedom (number of independent variables) is 22.46. One case had a value of Mahalanobis distance in far excess of the cut-off point. After deleting the one case, a total of 588 cases was analyzed.

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics about the variables. All means, ranges, and standard deviations are reasonable. The skewness and kurtosis values indicate that variables are not perfectly normal. Because of the robustness of regression, however, such deviation is deemed within the tolerable range. The correlation matrix did not indicate any multicollinearity problems. An additional analysis of the bivariate plots indicated a linear relationship between each of the independent variables with the dependent variable.

Five variables (age, income, education, marital status and race) served as control variables and entered into the first block. As our major analysis, we entered the grocery card usage variable to the regression equation at the second block with "control" variables given higher priority for entry.

Results

Eighty-five percent of respondents said they had at least one grocery card. Of these, nearly half said they used it always or most of the time. Three-fourths of the respondents said they shopped at the same store all the time or most of the time. Respondents were split just about evenly in paying attention to grocery ads. Twenty-one percent said they paid attention to ads "a lot" while another 21 percent said they paid no attention to the ads. Nearly a third said they planned shopping for the grocery promotions either always or most of the time while just over a third said they rarely or never did.

The Pearson's correlation showed a moderately strong positive correlation between paying attention to the ads and planning to take advantage of the promotions. While there were significant positive correlations between using the grocery card and paying attention to the ads and between using the card and planning shopping to take advantage of the promotions, the correlation was relatively weak. There was no correlation between shopping at the same store and using the card and weak negative correlations between shopping at the same store and planning shopping to use promotions. (See Table 2)

Age and income were related to advertising attention and using promotions. However, it was respondents in the mid-range of ages (over 24 and below 65) and mid-income ($20,000 to $39,999) who were more likely to do both of these (p=>.05 for each)

For the hierarchical regression, with five demographic variables in the equation, results were: $R^2 = .075$, $F(5,444) = 7.187$, $p < .001$, for the ad attention variable; $R^2 = .054$, $F(5,449) = 5.138$, $p < .001$, for the grocery loyalty variable; $R^2 = .085$, $F(5,438) = 8.114$, $p < .001$, for the grocery promotion variable. Education had a negative relationship with ad attention and grocery loyalty. Income also had a negative relationshiop to ad attention and grocery promotion. Age had a positive effect on grocery promotion and a negative effect on a grocery loyalty. Married respondents and African Americans were positively related to grocery promotion. The five control variables explain 7.5% of variance in ad attention, 5.4% in grocery shopping regularity, and 8.5% in grocery promotion.

Grocery card usage had significant positive effects on both ad attention and grocery promotion but not for grocery loyalty. Table 3 indicates grocery card usage variable produce incremental R^2 for ad attention by 4.5% and for grocery promotion by 5.0% (Incremental $R^2 = .045$, $F(1,443) = 22.50$, $p < .001$ for ad attention; Incremental $R^2 = .05$, $F(1,437) = 25.33$, $p < .001$). Grocery loyalty, however, was not explained by grocery card usage (Incremental $R^2 = .001$, $F(1,448) = .580$, $p > .4$).

Hypothesis One, that heavy users of grocery cards will pay more attention to grocery advertising than light users or non-holders is supported. Hypothesis Two, that heavy users of grocery cards will plan shopping to take advantage of store promotions more than will light users or non-holders, is also supported. However, Hypothesis Three, that heavy users of grocery cards will shop more regularly at the store(s) for which they hold the cards than will light users or non-holders was not supported.

Discussion

Grocery shopping is a habitual behavior and one that most people engage in at least once a week. Having a grocery card is relatively common among shoppers. Uses of the card vary, however. The results of this study show that those who have the card and use it frequently are more active in external search behaviors. Those consumers are more likely to pay attention to advertising and plan to take advantage of the promotions. Using the card, however, even when using it for specific advertised promotions, does not relate to store loyalty. Those who have and use the card to take advantage of promotions are likely to be those consumers who are interested in shopping bargains and "deals" and they abandon the store when there are better prices and "deals" to be had elsewhere.

This argues that the grocery stores not only have to get the cards into the hands of the consumers in the market area, but that they keep having to compete against other stores in the area with highly desirable promotions and prices to keep their card holders happy and active. More than one store offers a card in many areas; it seems likely, then, that price sensitive consumers use multiple cards to gain the greatest advantage every week, no matter which store offers it. These are active shoppers who engage in a strong external search process on a regular basis. For them, grocery shopping is not a low-involvement activity. It is a challenge either because they need to maximize dollars spent or because they just plain enjoy getting good deals.

Stores issue the cards to entice customers and to build store loyalty. But customers appear to remain grateful and loyal only at the time when they are getting the better prices and promotions from the store. And even then, mid-age and mid-income customers are most likely to take advantage of the card and its offers. Being married and being in the age group where one would be raising a family are related to use as well. It follows that stores need to do three things: 1) Continue to offer competitive promotions on a weekly basis, 2) Target special promotions to products that would appeal to those in the demographic range that responds, and 3) Consider offering promotions that give a premium for continuous or regular shopping at a certain level. An example of this latter would be a promotion that rewarded for x number of weeks for shopping at a certain dollar level. At the end of the time period, those customers who had complied would be given a special bonus – credit toward future purchases, free food, coupons, tickets to a popular local attraction or a similar prize. The loyal customer would have "earned" the prize in the same way frequent flyers earn free trips on airlines.

A limitation of this study is the few questions that we were allowed to put into the statewide survey. With only four grocery-related questions, only the most basic questions could be asked. However, this is the initial work for a larger study involving both a survey and interviews with consumers.

Conclusion

This is a largely unexplored area in advertising and promotions. Virtually nothing has been done in the scholarly literature and little in the trade press, with the exception of loyalty, which largely has been studies concerning brands and not stores.

There were obvious space limitations on the survey instrument we used for this initial study. Future work in this area involves a much larger study, funded by a grant, that is now in its initial stages. This study, a combination of survey and interviews, will explore areas such as responses to individual promotions, store perceptions, factors inducing loyalty, number of different stores in the preferred "set," willingness to try private brands, and specific uses of store advertising. Loyalty and advertising effectiveness assessments will be made as well.

TABLE 1
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF VARIABLES

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Dev.	Skewness (Std. Error)	Kurtosis (Std. Error)	N
Grocery Card Usage [1]	1	5	3.60	1.48	-0.65(.12)	-0.99(.23)	444
Ad Attention [2]	1	4	2.46	1.07	-0.04(.12)	-1.26(.23)	444
Grocery Loyalty [3]	2	5	3.93	0.74	-0.58(.12)	-0.44(.23)	444
Grocery Promotion [4]	1	5	2.85	1.38	0.03(.12)	-1.22(.23)	444
Age [5]	18	88	44.6	16.03	0.45(.12)	-0.54(.23)	444
Income [6]	1	7	4.39	1.97	-0.17(.12)	-1.21(.23)	444
Education [7]	7	21	13.86	2.46	0.27(.12)	0.19(.23)	444

NOTE:

* The variables in TABLE 1 are continuous variables. Categorical demographic variables are:
Gender: Male (36.9%); Female (63.1%). Marital status: Married (63%); Single (17%); Others (20%)
Race: White (79.1%); Black (14.8%); Others (6.1%).

1. We measured the variable asking, "Do you use a grocery card (1) always, (2) most of time, (3) sometimes, (4) rarely, (5) don't have card?" Scales were reversed for the data analysis. Thus 1 means "don't have card" and 5 refers to "always."
2. Ad attention was measured by asking, "How much attention would you say you pay to grocery store advertising to guide your regular shopping: (1) a lot of attention, (2) some attention, (3) a little attention, (4) no attention." Scales were reversed for the data analysis. Thus 1 refers to "no attention" in TABLE 1.
3. Grocery loyalty was measured by asking, "Would you say you shop at the same grocery store or chain, (1) always, (2) most of the time, (3) sometimes, (4) rarely, or (5) do you never do the grocery shopping? The scales also were reversed. Thus, 5 means "always."
4. Grocery promotion was measured by asking, "How often would you say you plan grocery store purchase to take advantage of special promotions? (1) always….(5) never.
5. This survey was conducted for the adults. Thus all of respondents are over 18.
6. Income was categorized: (1) less than $10000, (2) 10001-20000, (3) 20001-30000….(6) 50001-60000, and (7) more than 60000. We used this as continuous variable.
7. Education was measured by completion of school years: (1) 1st grade….(12) 12th grade—high school….(16) college grade….(18) master's degree….(20) Ph.D, and (21) more.

TABLE 2
CORRELATIONS BETWEEN KEY VARIABLES

	Read Grocery Advertising	Shop Same Store Regularly	Plan Shopping Around Promotions	Use Grocery Card
Read Grocery Advertising	1.000 (n=544)			
Shop Same Store Regularly	-.101* (n=543)	1.000 (n=587)		
Plan Shopping Around Promotions	.612*** (n=532)	-.103* (n=538)	1.000 (n=539)	
Use Grocery Card	.223*** (n=540)	.007 (n=548)	.227*** (n=535)	1.000 (n=549)

TABLE 3
GROCERY CARD EFFECTS ON AD ATTENTION, GROCERY LOYALTY, AND PROMOTION

	Ad Attention (N = 445)		Grocery Loyalty (N = 450)		Grocery Promotion (N = 439)	
	Regression Coefficients	Beta	Regression Coefficients	Beta	Regression Coefficients	Beta
I. Control Block						
Constant	2.851***		4.905***		2.326***	
Age	0.006*	0.096*	-0.006**	-0.128**	0.010**	0.116**
Education	-0.069**	-0.159**	-0.062***	-0.205***	-0.038	-0.069
Income	-0.070*	-0.129*	0.016	0.042	-0.115**	-0.165**
Marital Status	0.046	0.016	0.082	0.054	0.508***	0.183***
Race	0.199	0.066	-0.150	-0.071	0.448*	0.117*
II. Grocery Card Usage	0.152***	0.213***	0.017	0.035	0.207***	0.225***
III. Total R^2 of Control Block(%)	7.5		5.4		8.5	
IV. Incremental R^2 due to II(%)	4.5		0.1		5.0	
V. Total R^2(%)	12.0		5.5		13.5	

NOTES:

1. Marital status was dummy coded: Married was 1 and others was 0.
2. Race was dummy coded: Black was 1 and others was 0.
3. Regression analysis was based on listwise deletion. Thus we lost more than 100 cases from total of 588 for the analysis. There was no significant difference between listwise deletion and mean substitution method.
4. * $p<.05$: ** $p<.01$; *** $p<.001$

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Adv

The Effect of Idiocentrsim and Involvement on Atitude, Cognition and Behavioral Intention with respect to AIDS Appeal Types

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The Effect of Idiocentrism and Involvement on Attitude, Cognition and Behavioral Intention with respect to AIDS Appeal Types

Abstract

This study looks at the role played by idiocentrism/allocentrism in shaping consumers' attitude, cognition and behavioral intention in the context of AIDS appeal types. The level of involvement emerges to be a significant moderating factor that interacts with idiocentrsim to shape audience prefernce. This provides direction for an entirely new dimension of research in public health both from theoretical and applied perspectives. Cultures and sub-cultures may be studied in the context of individualism and its effects that may be observed at a cultural level. Campaigns may be designed at enhancing the level of audience involvement and targeting the audience with consistent culture-sensitive messages, based on the level of idiocentrsim/allocentrism.

Despite the widespread launch of AIDS campaigns designed for preventing the rapid spread of the disease, the number of people infected by AIDS continually keeps rising (Mann and Tarantola, 1996). Community-level, national, and international prevention and education efforts have not yet been effective in curbing the menacing spread of AIDS. What remains at the root of this wide gap is a lack of understanding of the target audience and its needs (National Commission on AIDS, 1992). Market segmentation and stratification have always remained at the core of widely accepted practices in commercial marketing (Berrigan and Finkbeiner, 1992; Croft, 1994; Wind, 1978). Albrect and Bryant (1996) argued that meaningful audience segmentation lies at the core of an effective health communication program. Therefore, the primary problem in AIDS prevention is identifying well-defined adopter groups and designing messages specifically for these groups (Fisher, 1988; Flora and Thoresen, 1988; Frankenberger and Sukhdial, 1994; Nowak et al. 1993).

Traditional commercial and social marketing approaches focus on geographic, demographic, psychographic, attitudinal and behavioral segmentation variables (Kotler, 1984; Green and Krieger, 1991). Personality, as a measure of audience characteristics, has been neglected in health communication. Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) argued that personality could serve as an important trait in understanding the audience and suggested personality constructs such as sensation seeking, creativity, religious world view, and Type A versus Type B. This paper advocates that personality plays a pivotal role in understanding the audience in health communication. It investigates the role played by one such personality construct, idiocentrism, in the context of persuasive AIDS messages and presents a framework for understanding advertising appeal types in the context of idiocentrism.

Idiocentrism/Allocentrism: A new dimension

Since Hofstede's (1984) seminal work on the differences among cultures, individualism/collectivism has emerged as an important construct. The importance of this construct has been supported both at theoretical and empirical levels (Triandis, 1995). Individualism pertains to people's tendency to value personal and individual time, freedom and experience (Hofstede, 1984; Parsons and Shils 1951; Reisman, Glazer and Denney, 1953; Roth, 1995).

Individualists view self as a relatively autonomous, self-sufficient entity independent from its surrounding interpersonal context (Geertz, 1984; Triandis, 1989). An individual strives to become independent of others by attending to his or her private qualities and cultivating and expressing those inner attributes that uniquely distinguish him or her from others (Markus and Kitayama, 1991; Suh, Diener, Oishi, and Triandis, 1988). Individualists believe in self-reliance, hedonism, competition, and emotional detachment from in-groups.

On the other hand, collectivists are more likely to have interdependent relationships with their in-groups. A collectivist subordinates his/her personal goals to the in-group goals. Identity among collectivists is defined by the relationships and group memberships and collectivists favor attitudes that reflect sociability, interdependence, and family integrity. Emphasis is laid on interdependence, harmony, family security, social hierarchies, cooperation, and low levels of competition (Han and Shavitt, 1994; Triandis, 1989, 1990, 1995; Triandis et. al., 1990).

Triandis (1995) presented four universal dimensions that classify between the constructs. The definition of self is interdependent in collectivism and independent in individualism (Markus and Kitayama, 1991; Reykowski, 1994; Triandis, 1995); collectivism ensures close alignment of personal and communal goals while individualism does not (Triandis, 1988, 1990, 1995); collectivist cognitions focus on norms, obligations, and duties while individualist cognitions focus on attitudes, personal needs, rights and contracts (Davidson et. al., 1976; Miller, 1994); individualism centers around rational advantages and disadvantages while collectivism emphasizes relationships.

Although the initial emphasis on the construct was at the cultural level, subsequent research has indicated a strong interest in studying individualism and collectivism at the individual level (Kim, 1994; Triandis, 1994; Yamaguchi et. al., 1995). Individuals within cultures vary along the same dimensions and research at the individual level examines the relationship between each person's individualist or collectivist tendencies and his/her behavior, cognition, attitude and/or emotion. To avoid confusion in the conceptualization of the construct at the cultural and individual levels, Triandis et al. (1989) defined person level individualism as idiocentrism and person level collectivism as allocentrism. The characteristics of an idiocentric or allocentric perspective have important implications for the study of the differences in emotional, cognitive, and motivational experiences of individuals within cultures and their behavior.

Involvement

In this article, involvement is conceptualized in terms of the issue (Flora and Maibach, 1990; Salmon, 1986). Issue involvement becomes significant when an issue has personal meaning (Sherif et. al., 1973), intrinsic meaning (Sherif and Hovland, 1961), or when the target audiences perceive the issue to have significant consequences for their own lives (Apsler and Sears, 1968). According to Petty and Cacioppo's (1986) elaboration likelihood model (ELM), issue involvement has a major influence on the cognitive strategy used to process persuasive communication. Highly involved audiences primarily process information central to the message whereas audience members who are in a low involvement state process information peripheral to the message.

Advertising Appeal Types in Health Communication

In the context of commercial marketing, communicating a clearly defined brand image to a target segment has always been regarded as a focal point (Gardner and Levy 1955; Grubb and Grathwhol 1967; Moran 1973; Park, Jaworski and MacInnnis 1987; Reynolds and Gutman 1984; White 1959). A clearly defined brand image enables consumers to identify the needs satisfied by a brand (Roth 1995) and serves as a key to product success (Gardner and Levy 1955; Roth 1995; Shocker and Srinivasan 1979; Wind 1973). As Roth (1995) argues, developing a needs-based image strategy provides the foundation for marketing program development and enables the brand to create a clear and distinct position within its category. This argument can be extrapolated to the arena of social marketing where campaign designers are constantly vying with other products and services to grab the consumers' attention and to get them to adopt and

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Most early AIDS campaigns focused on rational rather than emotional arguments and urged audiences to seek information rather than advocating specific behaviors to reduce the chance of contracting the disease (Brinson and Brown, 1997; Friemuth, Hammond, Edgar, and Monahan, 1990). Johnson et al. (1997), in their study of 317 AIDS Public Service Announcements (PSAs) from 33 countries produced from 1987 to 1993, found that rational appeals make up the single largest category of ads. Rational appeals concentrate on primarily factual information aimed at solving a particular problem while emotional appeals focus on dramatizations and narratives.

Flora and Maibach (1990), in their work on cognitive responses to AIDS information, argued that emotional AIDS messages are more memorable and create more of a desire to seek further information about AIDS than do rational messages. According to associative models of memory, the positive or negative emotional valence of a message will affect not only its storage and retrieval but also the selection of other experiences with which that memory will be associated (Bower, 1981). Also, emotion may have differential information-processing effects during different stages of the message experience, so that negative emotions are processed earlier and more rapidly, whereas positive experiences are processed later and elaborated more thoroughly. Empirical evidence points out that emotional messages are generally more memorable than rational messages (Friestad & Thornson, 1985).

Different frameworks have been suggested for the categorization of appeal types. The normative model proposed by Park, Jaworski and MacInnis (1986) is one of the most comprehensive and most widely used models in current literature (Roth 1995). According to the normative model, appeal types may be classified as functional, social, and sensory.

Functional needs motivate the search for products and/or services that solve consumption-related problems. Therefore, a functional appeal type focuses on problem solving and problem prevention. This type of approach is similar to the utilitarian approach discussed by Shavitt, Lowrey and Han (1992). Utilitarian attitudes, focussing on the inherent qualities and benefits of the product, maximize the rewards and minimize the punishments obtained from objects in one's environment. Therefore, behavior is guided in a direction that obtains the benefits associated with the objects (Katz 1960; Shavitt et al. 1992). Social brand appeals, on the other hand, focus on fulfilling internally generated needs for self-enhancement, role position, group membership and affiliation, or ego-identification (Park, Jaworski and MacInnis 1986; Roth 1995), clustered together as the social identity function (Shavitt 1989, 1990). Such strategies are in concurrence with image based attitudes that focus on the impressions created by using the product (Debono and Parker 1991; Snyder and DeBono 1985, 1987; Shavitt 1989, 1990; Shavitt et al. 1992). In this context, attitudes function in the service of one's public image and self-expression. According to Smith et al. (1956), attitudes help gain social acceptance by mediating relationships with other people. They also symbolize and express one's identity by promoting identification with reference groups. Sensory images build around the novelty, variety seeking, and sensory gratification needs. The importance of experiential needs in consumption has been illustrated by work on variety seeking (McAlister 1979, 1982; McAlister and Pessemier 1982), consumer aesthetics, and experiential consumption (Hirschman and Holbrook 1982; Holbrook and Hirschman 1982; Holbrook et al. 1984).

Traditional health communication theories such as the health belief model, the theory of planned action, self efficacy model, and the theory of reasoned action have consistently focussed on the functional needs, without paying attention to other need types. As already discussed, most of these models have been inconclusive and unpredictable (Strebel 1997). Using the normative model provides a more holistic approach to the understanding of the persuasive processes in health communication. It also provides an alternative approach to health communication. Under this framework, persuasive strategies in health communication can be studied and designed in the context of functional, social and sensory appeal types, optimizing the effectiveness of the public health messages.

Individualism/Collectivism, Involvement and the Persuasion Process

The level of individualism affects the degree to which a particular advertising appeal will be effective (Roth, 1995; Han and Shavitt, 1994; Zhang and Gelb, 1996). High individualism has a positive and marginally significant impact on the market share of functional and sensory appeals (Roth, 1995; Han and Shavitt, 1994; Zhang and Gelb, 1996). Idiocentrics are persuaded by advertisements emphasizing personal benefits, weighing individual likes and dislikes and perceived costs and benefits (Han and Shavitt, 1994). On the other hand, allocentrics stress on social norms, roles and values, and therefore, find social brand images that reinforce group membership and affiliation more attractive. Idiocentrics seek self-satisfaction and hence, like functional and sensory appeals that satisfy a problem solving or sensory gratification need. Allocentrics prefer social appeals that perform a relational function involving persons, environment and socio-cultural systems (Malinowski, 1944).

However, issue involvement is a moderating factor that affects appeal preference (Kahle and Homer, 1985; Petty et. al., 1983; Han and Shavitt, 1994). A high involvement situation leads to evaluation of an issue/product in terms of criteria that are considered highly important, including cultural value standards (Han and Shavitt, 1994). Under low involvement, on the other hand, a person is responsive to a wider variety of appeals. On the other hand, Flora and Maibach (1990), in their study on emotional and rational messages, concluded that people, under low involvement conditions, remember emotional messages much more than rational messages.

Therefore, under low involvement, both allocentrics and idiocentrics are responsive to a wider variety of appeals and are not expected to demonstrate their liking for any particular type of appeal. On the other hand, under high involvement conditions, allocentrics prefer social appeals and idiocentrics prefer functional appeals to other appeal types. It may be hypothesized that:

1) Under low involvement conditions, allocentrics will respond positively to functional, social and sensory appeals, without demonstrating much significant difference among the preference types.
2) Under low involvement conditions, idiocentrics will respond positively to functional, social and sensory appeals, without demonstrating much significant difference among the preference types.
3) Under high involvement conditions, allocentrics will demonstrate a more positive attitude toward social appeals as compared to functional and sensory appeals.

4) Under high involvement conditions, idiocentrics will demonstrate a more positive attitude toward functional appeals as compared to sensory and social appeals.

Attitude-Behavior-Cognition: Similarities and Differences

Although traditional psychological and sociological theories have addressed the issue of congruency between attitudes (affect), beliefs (cognition) and behaviors, very little work has been done to show the consistency (Insko and Schopler, 1967) among them. Flora and Maibach (1990), in their work on rational and emotional appeals, observed that the type of appeal did not have significant higher-order effects in the context of behavioral intention although cognition was affected. Middlestadt et. al. (1994) argued that, in many cases, non-belief-based processing forms the basis of attitude formation. Zajonc (1980) proposed that affective judgments may be independent of cognitive operations. At the same length, Gorn (1982) argued that a positive affect toward music may be directly transferred to the product by way of classical conditioning instead of by a cognitive chain. Therefore, attitude and cognition may not always operate in harmony with each other. This paper also explores the effect of idiocentrism/allocentrism on cognition and behavioral intention at the cognitive and behavioral levels.

Method

Subjects

The 73 respondents were undergraduate students between the ages of 18 and 28 and received extra credit in their course in exchange for participation.

Message Appeal

The advertisements were created instead of being picked up from those available in order to avoid recognition bias and any other effects of prior attitudes. Also, it was important to create mutually exclusive slogans that appropriately represent each of the categories. Advertisements contained three headlines, numbered A, B, and C, each representing a particular appeal type, and a simple body copy to eliminate any bias created by more elaborate executions. Headlines were manipulated to reflect functional, social, and sensory appeal types. Initially, nine advertisement headlines were designed by the author, each appeal type being represented by three headlines. Six judges viewed all the 9 headlines and independently classified them as functional, social or sensory. Based on the scores assigned by the coders and the agreement among these scores, three headlines were picked, each representing a particular category. The six judges agreed on 100% of their headline classification for the three selected headlines.

Presentation of Ads

Each subject read and responded to all the three advertisement headlines. The three headlines were arranged beside a simple and general body copy, in harmony with each appeal type. The order of appeals was counterbalanced so that a functional advertisement was read first for one set of questionnaires, a social appeal was read first for another set, and a sensory appeal was read first for the rest.

Independent Measures

The subjects were measured in terms of their degree of idiocentrism, using the individualism instrument created by Triandis (1995). A reliability test yielded a Chronbach's alpha of .78. Based on the median score, respondents were classified as high and low idiocentrics. Involvement was measured using Flora and Maibach's (1974)

AIDS involvement scale. Chronbach's alpha for the scale was at .84. On the basis of a median split, half of the respondents were classified as high involvement and half as low involvement.

Dependent Measures

Subjects rated each of the advertisement headlines on a 7-point Likert scale including items such as pleasantness, appeal, attractiveness, excitement, interesting, fascinating and meaningfulness. These items served as a measure of attitude toward the headlines. Cognition was measured on a 7-point Likert scale comprising of items such as "easy to remember," and "makes me read the ad." Finally, behavioral intention was measured by items such as "makes me want to learn more about AIDS," "makes me think about my behavior," and "makes me want to change my behavior."

Results

The effectiveness of idiocentrism as an index of appeal preference was strongly supported throughout the findings. In the context of attitude toward the advertisement, low idiocentrics demonstrated significantly ($p<.05$) higher mean ratings for social appeals than did high idiocentrics (High Idiocentrics = 9.68; Low Idiocentrism = 11,783). The sensory and functional appeals did not demonstrate any significant differences between high and low idiocentrics. Furthermore, the level of involvement did not have any significant effect on attitude toward functional, social and sensory appeals. Also, no interaction effect was observed.

At the cognitive level, the results supported the findings of Flora and Maibach, demonstrating significantly ($p < .05$) higher cognitive effects under low involvement situations ($M = 15.2$) than under high involvement situations ($M = 12.\ 97$). Also, idiocentrism had significant effects ($p < .05$) on cognitive responses to the social appeal, demonstrating stronger cognitive effects for low idiocentrics ($M = 14.63$) than for high idiocentrics ($M = 12.38$). No significant interaction effects were observed.

In the context of behavioral intention, functional appeals demonstrated significantly ($p < .05$) higher behavioral effects under high involvement than under low involvement (Low Involvement = 16.91; High Involvement = 17.21). Also, a significant interaction effect was observed for functional appeals. The interaction effect is demonstrated in Figure 1.

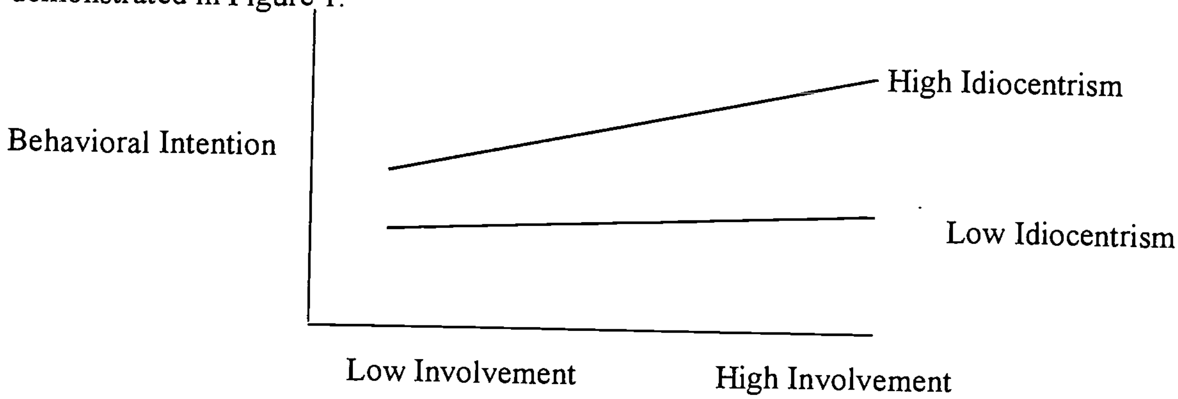

Figure 1: The Effect of Involvement and Idiocentrism on Behavioral Intention

Similarly, no significant main effects were observed in the context of sensory appeals. However, significant ($p< .01$) interaction effects were observed. In agreement with the nomological network, it was observed that under a low level of involvement, low idiocentrics demonstrate stronger behavioral intentions for sensory appeals than under a high level of involvement (Low Involvement = 15.77; High Involvement = 16.64). On the other hand, under high levels of involvement, high idiocentrics demonstrate an equal effect size as under low levels of involvement (High Involvement = 16.64; Low Involvement = 16.59). The results are shown in Figure 2.

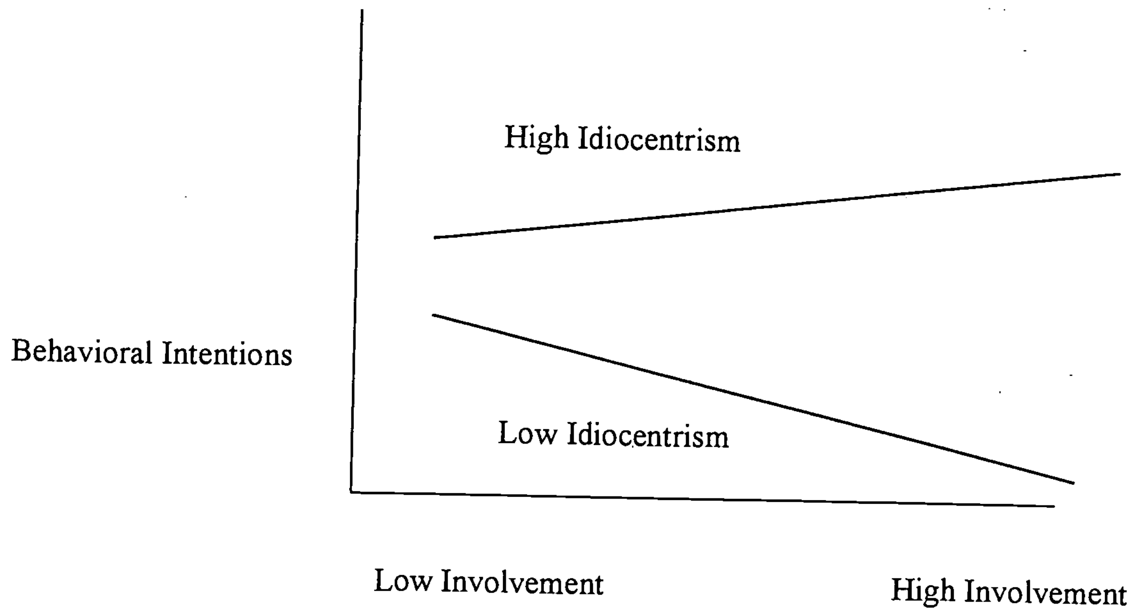

Figure 2: Interaction Effect between Involvement and Idiocentrism.

At the second level, each of the individual hypotheses were tested by running repeated measures ANOVA to compare attitudes toward the different types of image appeals. Hypothesis 1 was supported by the data. There wasn't any significant difference in the attitude toward social, functional and sensory appeals in a low involvement, allocentric situation. However, the trend demonstrated a preference for social appeals over functional and sensory appeals (Functional = 12.82; Social = 9.82; Sensory = 9.47). Also, under the low involvement condition, idiocentrics showed no particular preference for a particular type of appeal, supporting hypothesis 2. However, comparing the means demonstrates a stronger preference for sensory and functional appeals over social appeals (Functional = 9.84; Social = 9.47 and Sensory = 12.82). Hypothesis 3 stated that under high involvement conditions, allocentrics will demonstrate a more positive attitude toward social appeals as compared to functional and sensory appeals. The hypothesis was significantly supported ($F(2,32) = 4$, $p < .05$) with the attitude toward social appeals being proven to be of a greater effect size than functional and/or sensory appeals (Social = 16.29; Functional = 11.91 and Sensory = 11.23). Similarly, the data supported hypothesis 4 significantly ($F(2, 32) = 9.64$, $p < .005$), showing that high idiocentrics have a stronger preference for functional appeals (M = 13.53) than for social (M = 9.53) and sensory appeals (M = 9.18). The results of the first part are demonstrated in Table 1.

In the context of the cognitive effects, high involvement levels for allocentrics led to a stronger cognitive response toward social appeals (M = 16.3) than for functional (M = 15.4) and sensory appeals (M = 15.91). Although the effect wasn't significant, there was considerable difference between the effect size of the social appeal and the next ranked appeal. Also, under low involvement conditions, low idiocentrics demonstrated a greater preference for sensory appeals (M = 15.88) than for social (M = 13.18) or functional (M = 11.88) appeals. In agreement with the nomological network, high Idiocentrics, under high involvement situations demonstrated significantly ($F(2, 32) = 5.14$, $p < .05$) stronger effect for functional appeals (M = 17) than for sensory (M = 14.06) or social (M = 12.65) appeals. Also, under low involvement situations, idiocentrics demonstrated their significantly stronger ($F(2, 32) = 5.30$, $p < .05$) preference for sensory appeals (M = 17.71) than for functional (M = 14.12) or social (M = 12.12) appeals. The findings for the cognitive effects for all four interaction cells support the nomological network of this study. Although significant effects were not observed with either high or low involvement situations for allocentrics, the effect sizes were strong enough to argue that the data pointed in the direction of the theoretical framework. Also, for idiocentrics, the results supported the nomological network both for high and low involvement situations.

Table 1: The attitude toward functional, social and sensory appeals for the Interaction

	Low Involvement	High Involvement
Allocentrism	No Significant Effects Attitude-Social = 11.53 Attitude-Functional = 11.29 Attitude-Sensory = 8.71	Significant ($F(2,32) = 4$, $p < .05$) Social = 16.29; Functional = 11.91 and Sensory = 11.23
Idiocentrism	No Significant effects Sensory = 12.82 Functional = 9.84; Social = 9.47	Significant $F(2, 32) = 9.64$, $p < .005$ Functional = 13.53 Social = 9.53 Sensory = 9.18

Table 2: The Interaction between Involvement and Idiocentrism for Cognitive Effects

	Low Involvement	High Involvement
Allocentrism	Not significant effects Sensory appeals (M = 15.88) Social (M = 13.18) Functional (M = 11.88) appeals	Not significant effects Social appeals (M = 16.3) Functional (M = 15.4) Sensory appeals (M = 15.91)
Idiocentrism	Significant ($F(2, 32) = 5.30$, $p < .05$) Sensory appeals (M = 17.71) Functional (M = 14.12) or Social (M = 12.12) appeals	Significant ($F(2, 32) = 5.14$, $p < .05$) Functional appeals (M = 17) Sensory (M = 14.06) Social (M = 12.65)

Allocentric respondents under low involvement conditions demonstrated significantly ($F(2, 32) = 4.00$, $p < .05$) stronger higher order responses such as "intention to change behavior" for functional appeals (M = 16.29), followed by social (M = 14.17) and sensory appeals (M = 11.65). Under high involvement situations, allocentrics demonstrated non-significant results, with greater preference for functional appeals (M = 18.4) than for sensory (M = 16.64) and social appeals (M = 16.32). Under situations of low involvement, idiocentrism led to non-significant effects although functional appeals (M = 18.11) were preferred over sensory (M = 15.77) and social appeals (M = 15.47). Idiocentrism demonstrated non-significant effects under high involvement situations, maintaining a stronger preference for functional appeals (M = 17.59) than for sensory (M = 16.59) or social appeals (M = 15.65). The results are demonstrated in Table 3.

Table 3: The Interaction between Idiocentrism and Involvement in the Context of Behavioral Intention

	Low Involvement	High Involvement
Allocentrism	Significant ($F(2, 32) = 4.00$, $p < .05$) Functional appeals (M = 16.29) Social (M = 14.17) Sensory appeals (M = 11.65)	Non Significant Effects Functional appeals (M = 18.4) Sensory (M = 16.64) Social appeals (M = 16.32)
Idiocentrism	Non Significant Effects Functional appeals (M = 18.11) Sensory (M = 15.77) Social appeals (M = 15.47)	Non Significant Effects Functional appeals (M = 17.59) Sensory (M = 16.59) Social appeals (M = 15.65)

Discussion

The current study examined the role played by idiocentrism-allocentrism in shaping the attitudes, cognitions and behavioral intentions of members of audience when they are exposed to different appeal types. The normative model of appeal categorization was used. Even though idiocentrism has been widely studied at cross-cultural levels in the context of commercial advertising and marketing literature, little effort has been made in understanding the manifestations of individualism at the individual level. Individualism has not been looked at as a segmentation variable to divide the audience members. Neither has the field of health communication looked at this construct. Given the strong cross-cultural nature of health communication work, individualism-collectivism and idiocentrism-allocentrism serve important functions in understanding the effectiveness of persuasive messages.

As the results indicated, idiocentrism-allocentrism is a significant personality construct that affects audience response to advertising appeals. Involvement serves as a significant moderating variable that affects the impact of idiocentrism on consumer attitude, cognition, and behavioral intention.

At the attitudinal level, the results clearly indicated that low idiocentrism positively affected the preference for social appeals, confirming the theoretical framework of this study. On the other hand, high idiocentrism led to a greater preference for functional appeals over other appeal types. The level of involvement served as a moderating variable and did exhibit significant interaction effects with idiocentrism. High levels of involvement led to significantly strong effect sizes in the context idiocentrism and allocentrism. Low levels of involvement, as argued by Han and Shavitt

(1994) did not demonstrate a marked preference for a particular appeal type. Therefore, in the context of public health campaigns, it becomes extremely important to assess the level of involvement of the audience members in a particular population. Only when a high level of involvement has been achieved will allocentrism-idiocentrism play a role in shaping attitudes toward functional, social, or sensory appeal types. This implication modifies the normative model of image appeals. According to the normative model (Park, Jaworski and MacInnis, 1986), depth strategies are more effective than breadth strategies because a clearly defined brand image enables consumers to identify the needs satisfied by a brand (Roth, 1995). Based on the findings of this paper, it may be argued that only under high levels of involvement will members of the audience be sensitive to the particular image type that is matches their needs. Therefore, breadth strategies will be more successful under low levels of involvement while depth strategies will be more successful under high levels of involvement. AIDS campaigns must aim at increasing the levels of involvement of the audience members and then targeting the audience with an image strategy that fits their idiocentric-allocentric character.

At the cognitive level, under high involvement, both allocentrics and idiocentrics demonstrated stronger effects for social and functional appeals respectively, in agreement with the theoretical framework of this study. However, under low levels of involvement, the respondents demonstrated their preference for sensory appeals over other appeal types. This is in agreement with the findings of Flora and Maibach (1990) suggesting that sensory/emotional appeals had stronger cognitive effects than other appeal types. It may be argued that under low involvement conditions, people process messages through the peripheral route (Petty and Cacioppo, 1983), making classically conditioned associations with issue-relevant or secondary cues (Kelman, 1961; Mitchell and Olson, 1981; Mowen, 1980) which may be positive or negative in nature.

At the behavioral intention level, irrespective of the level of involvement or the level of idiocentrism-allocentrism, respondents demonstrated a preference for functional appeals over other appeal types. The results did not demonstrate any significant difference in the appeal types, except for idiocentrics under a low level of involvement. As suggested by earlier studies, behavior is one of the most difficult things to change. Although change may be achieved at the attitudinal and cognitive levels, respondents are much more resistant to behavioral changes. This may be the reason for the non-significant effects in the context of behavioral intention. Furthermore, the preference for functional appeal types over other appeals may be substantiated by the argument that, in the context of AIDS or any other public health issue, behavior is central to the person's self-concept. Especially in the AIDS environment, when people are concerned about preventive issues, it boils down to the functional issue of saving one's life. One advertisement will not elicit behavior changes based on idiocentrism-allocentrism. However, a consistent campaign focusing on a depth approach based on the normative model may be able to achieve the desired behavioral change more effectively with an audience consistent theme that anchors on idiocentrism-allocentrism. Future research should look at the long term effects of functional, social, sensory appeals on allocentrics/idiocentrics when administered in the form of a depth-based campaign. Longitudinal studies may be conducted to study the process of attitudinal, cognitive and behavioral changes in situations of low and high involvement with respect to the level of idiocentrism.

Conclusion

The findings of this study suggest that idiocentrism does play a pivotal role in affecting preference for appeal types. Involvement emerges to be a significant moderating factor that needs to be considered when designing campaigns. Furthermore, traditional segmentation variables such as demographic and geographic need to be reconsidered. Instead, research should start focusing on other variables such as personality, beliefs and values. Audience segments may be clustered together based on their shared values and beliefs. This provides direction for an entirely new dimension of research in public health both from theoretical and applied perspectives. Cultures and sub-cultures may be studied in the context of individualism and the effects that may be observed at a cultural level. In the context of cross-cultural campaigns, that would definitely be an excellent deviating from the Eurocentric approaches that have dictated the field of public health. Campaigns may be designed at enhancing the level of audience involvement and targeting the audience with consistent culture-sensitive messages based on the depth strategy proposed in the normative model.

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Recall, Liking and Creativity in TV Commercials: A New Approach

by

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Recall, Liking and Creativity in TV Commercials: A New Approach

ABSTRACT

Three advertising effectiveness dimensions were linked in a local random telephone survey asking respondents' most disliked or liked commercial. The survey included describing the commercials, brand preference, television viewing hours and demographics. Seniors in advertising judged the ads' creativity. Among many findings related to past research was the suggestion that people "carry a set" of liked and disliked commercials. The study's major contribution may be its novel way of identifying memorable ads and assessing creativity.

Recall, Liking and Creativity in TV Commercials: A New Approach

by

Gerald Stone, Donna Besser and Loran Lewis

This study focuses on three aspects that should be at the center of investigation about advertising: 1) its memorability or recall, 2) the relationship between recall and likability, and 3) whether recall and likability are linked with an ad's creativity.

The connection between creativity, likability and recall would seem to be the essence of what advertising is all about: creating likable and memorable commercials as a prelude to selling products and services. There is a wealth of research on these essential elements, but it is not at all clear that ads are memorable; that likable ads are more memorable than the disliked; or that a creative ad is either remembered or liked.

This research considers the three elements by asking a local random sample whether they remember a liked and disliked television commercial and to describe the commercial. A new measure of creativity is used to compare the liked and disliked ads. Predictor variables include television viewing frequency and demographics; brands are used as control variables.

While studying the interplay of three advertising measures may seem complicated, the study is really quite straightforward. As an exploratory study, it will not offer definitive answers, but this is the first known study to draw the three essential elements together as groundwork for future research.

Review of Literature

The expectation in this study was that to be a superior sales tool, a commercial should be liked or disliked enough to register in a viewer's easy recall and that a more creative commercial is more likely to register. Past research on the three areas of recall, liking and creativity will be reviewed separately prior to considering studies that merge two of the areas.

Recall of advertising. Memorability is measured as the ability to recall an ad, tested by a variety of methods (Pieters and Bijmolt 1997) but primarily by experimental procedures. The methods used and the outcomes derived are somewhat controversial, although recall is conceded to be a necessary condition of advertising effectiveness (Dubow 1994).

An extensive body of research has accumulated over three decades that indicates both disliked and liked ads are memorable and result in recall. In fact, there is considerable debate in the literature about whether an irritating commercial has higher recall than a favorite commercial. This is an inconclusive area of study, but one that narrowly results in the expectation that an irritating or disliked commercial will be more memorable than a well liked commercial (Bartos 1981; Englis 1990).

One of the confounding variables in recall is the brand, which is thought to be of such powerful influence that researchers go to considerable lengths to try to control brand effects, usually with mixed results (Pechmann and Stewart 1990).

According to one review of extensive industry and psychological research, age is negatively associated with recall of advertising: younger people have higher recall than older adults (Dubow 1995).

Recall, then, is an integral aspect of advertising effectiveness clearly recognized as such in the research literature. However, measuring methods vary considerably; the jury is still out on whether liked or disliked ads are more memorable; brand is a powerful intervening variable; and youth's superior recall ability is the single documented demographic predictor.

Liking advertising. When it comes to liking television commercials, Americans have long said they don't. The studies show that the public claims to dislike television ads generally (Marschalk Company 1980) but is more favorable to individual commercials (Biel 1985). However, more recent studies using national rather than regional samples indicate the dislike attitude might be changing as consumers feel more entertained by advertising (Shavitt, Lowrey and Haeffner 1999). The preponderance of studies says liking the ad predicts liking the product (Thorson 1991), although cause-and-effect is unclear (Alwitt, Benet and Pitts 1993).

Theories about likability suggest that if viewers like an ad they should pay attention and respond to the message, or if they like an ad they will associate more positive feelings toward the brand. Research indicates both processes occur and are intertwined (Madden, Allen and Twible 1988). For example, while viewers report more negativity toward comparative ads, these ads have higher recall (Donthu 1998).

Regardless of the process taking place, liking a commercial is thought to equate with the ad's effectiveness (Aaker and Stayman 1990). Studies generally support this concept, although both positive and negative (irritating/silly) attributes of an ad were related to liking and effectiveness (Brown and Stayman 1992). One New Zealand study concluded that liking beer advertising had no effect on brand loyalty or consumption for viewers age 18-21 but did have an effect on consumers 21 and older (Casswell and Zhang 1998).

The research conclusion is that liking is only one of many elements of ad effectiveness (Hollis 1994) but a potentially important one in building brand loyalty (Callcott and Phillips 1996). Earlier public attitudes against ads may be changing toward liking them, although both positive and negative aspects of ads are thought to increase recall.

Creativity. The concept is an ephemeral quality in judging advertising that extends from aesthetic values to whether the ad sells the product. Advertising professionals themselves judge differently depending on their organizational role (Hirschman 1989). Even those who teach creative strategies rely on varied approaches borrowed from psychology but concede that the guidelines are only suggestions (Schultz and Barnes 1995).

Studies that come closest to measuring creativity may be those that focus on treatment type or executional styles, however these use recall, comprehension and persuasion rather than measures of creative quality (Lasky, Fox and Crask 1994).

Another stream of research deals with the psychological impact of message elements such as music (Stewart and Punj 1998) or attention-arresting attributes such as shot length (MacLachlan and Logan 1993), or dramatic scripts (Deighton and Hoch 1993), although creativity of the message is implied rather than analyzed. Some analysis is offered in research on using "absurdities" in advertising, said to be a variation on what is meant by creativity (Maddock and Fulton 1996), and some analysis links creativity with ad expenditures or product sales (Bell 1992), but none of these approaches attempts to directly assess creativity.

One attempt that used national creative awards as a measure matched creativity with marketing effectiveness and found that people judge commercials based on their appeal to self-image (Kover, Goldberg and James 1995). This research supported creative designers' theory that an ad's positive effect is transferred to the brand (Kover 1995).

In all, the studies of creativity are limited and abstract, suggesting that creativity is an advertising dimension in need of additional investigation.

Studies that link two of the concepts. One study used measures of liking, recall, attention, communication of message, brand name and product sales.

Walker and Dubitsky (1994) reported that liking is related with attention and recall, but not to communication of message or recognition of brand. However, liking the commercial was linked with intent to purchase the brand and persuasion scores. These researchers concluded that liking is a very general measure, but ads that are liked have a greater chance of being noticed and remembered.

A decade-long, in-market tracking study linked ad awareness with likability and found a direct relationship between the two (du Plessis 1994). The researcher considered several psychological models combining recall and liking to predict ad effectiveness, and added a new conceptualization derived from his data.

One study of print media ads drew a connection between recall, liking and creativity, however, the creativity measure was asking respondents if they found the ad interesting. Even so, interesting ads were directly related to liked ads and to recall and recognition measures (Stapel 1998). But another point of view is that creativity has little to do with either liking, recall or product sales (Evans 1998).

These limited studies suggest that dealing with more than one of the three measures — liking, recall and creativity — is a recent strategy but a probable direction for future research. The present study explores the interaction of all three measures.

Hypotheses

The literature review of commercial recall, liking and creativity led to these hypotheses:

1) People are able to recall a favorite and disliked commercial, and they are able to describe those ads.

2) People are more likely to recall disliked commercials than those they like.

3) People will correctly name the product in both their favorite and most disliked commercial.

4) Recall of the commercial is associated with liking or disliking the brand.

5) Those who recall a disliked commercial will also recall a liked commercial.

6) Recall of both favorite and disliked commercials is associated with hours of watching television.

7) Recall of commercials is inversely related to age.

8) Recall of favorite or disliked commercials will be the same regardless of race, education, income or gender.

9) Favorite commercials are likely to be more creative.

Methodology

About 40 students in a senior-level advertising research methods course used the survey as the semester group project during the fall 1998. After discussion of research principles to assess public perception of television commercials, a 12-item questionnaire was prepared, pretested and revised (see Appendix).

The questionnaire asked hours per day of television viewing; if subjects had a disliked and/or favorite commercial and if so a brief description of the commercial; and five demographic items: age, ethnicity, education, income and gender.

Some thought went into whether the disliked or the liked commercial should be asked first. The pre-test alternated the two questions, with the result that both received equal responses. Because past studies (Bartos 1981; Englis

1990) suggested that irritating commercials would be better remembered, disliked ads was asked first.

The study was a telephone sample of residences with toll-free listings taken from the current edition of the local directory. Each number was selected using a four-step random process leading to a single residential listing on a directory page. Any business listing (these account for perhaps 15% of the white pages layout) was disallowed, and the random process was repeated until a residential listing was selected. Last-digit replacement was used for selected numbers, alternating ±1.

This sampling method has been used frequently in the local market (Stone, O'Donnell and Banning 1997) with acceptable results, although asking to speak to the adult resident with the most recent birthday (Lavrakas 1993; Frey and Metens 1995) produced a 60% female sample.

Students made calls Sunday through Tuesday evening, Oct. 4-6, 1998, while being closely supervised by the course instructor and a graduate teaching assistant. Survey forms took less than five minutes, averaging about three minutes, with no problems noted in administration. The survey had a completion rate of 70%, with a sample of 418 and a margin of error of ±5% (Lavrakas 1993; Kinnick, Krugman and Cameron 1996).

As seniors in advertising, the students had completed two previous courses in designing ads and were currently enrolled in a campaigns course. They were qualified to judge the creativity of television commercials named by survey respondents. Groups of students were assigned to view the commercials named and to assess the ads for creativity using the following standard: "Is the commercial creative? Does it attract and hold attention, and effectively portray the product/service? If you had produced the commercial, would you be proud of your work?"

Obviously, creativity is a subjective precept, and even college seniors in the same advertising class might be influenced by a host of biases toward the brand. In fact, there was some disagreement about some commercials' creativity. Thus, to be placed in the "creative" category, 80% of the students judging the ad had to agree that it was creative. Less agreement placed the ad in the "non-creative" category.

Students in the class, who served as coders, knew the general purpose and methods of the study. For example, a class assignment required finding a relevant research article, and students pretested the questionnaire and served as telephone interviewers. Although several in-class discussions dealt with commercial liking and recall, the hypotheses were not discussed until after the data were coded. Coding the questionnaire had few if any judgment calls, and the "creativity" variable required 80% intercoder agreement. In all, coder bias was not a concern.

Findings

Table 1 describes survey frequencies and addresses the first few hypotheses. The sample was able to recall and describe both favorite and disliked commercials. Survey items were: "Is there a current television commercial that you find really annoying, one that you particularly dislike?" and "Is there a current television commercial that you enjoy watching when it comes on, one that you particularly like?" These items use classic uncued recall, considered an excellent predictor of an ad's effectiveness (Haley and Baldinger 1991).

A substantial 43% named a disliked ad, and 65% of this group could describe the ad. A majority of 58% named an ad they liked, and 91% of this group described the ad. Hypothesis 1, that people are able to recall a favorite and disliked commercial, and they will be able to describe those ads, is supported.

Unfortunately, the study is not a convincing test of whether people remember disliked commercials more than those they like. Despite the pre-test's outcome of recall balance, a better approach would have required a split-form survey in which the sequence of the like-dislike questions was alternated. In this study, recall of favorite commercials might have been increased after subjects considered "disliked" first question. Still, the results strongly suggest that people recall commercials they like more than those they dislike, and hypothesis 2 is rejected.

No data are presented for hypothesis 3 because the data were too consistent to merit coding. Almost every subject who named a liked or disliked commercial also named the brand or service, and almost every subject got the brand correct (these levels exceeded 95%). Hypothesis 3 is accepted. These findings are a clear indication that if a person can name a favorite or particularly disliked commercial, the person has already associated the commercial with the product or service advertised. While the finding doesn't answer the chicken-and-egg question of brand versus ad influence, it supports past research that the two are inextricably coupled.

To answer the chicken-and-egg question, a follow-up item was asked after subjects named a liked or disliked commercial. They were asked: "Is this your favorite (or most disliked) brand?" Only 12% of respondents naming a disliked commercial said they disliked the brand. A much larger 29% of respondents naming a liked commercial said they liked the brand. These percents are not very convincing, and hypothesis 4 is rejected. This finding contradicts past research that clearly links brand preference with attitudes toward commercials.

Moving beyond descriptive data, Table 2 shows the outcomes of chi-square and ANOVA analysis in regard to the remaining hypotheses.

First is the finding of similar recall: If a person can recall a disliked ad, the person is also more likely to recall a liked ad ($p < .01$). Hypothesis 5 is accepted indicating that commercial recall ability lies within the person, and that about two-thirds of those who named a disliked ad also named one they liked.

Hours of watching television was strongly related to recall of both a favorite and a disliked commercial. Those who named either type ad watched television more, supporting hypothesis 6.

Hypotheses 7 deals with types of people who recalled ads. The literature says that younger people should be much better at recall than older people. This hypothesis was rejected with only a mean one-year age difference between the two groups for disliked ads and a two-year difference for liked ads.

Hypothesis 8 predicted that recall of liked or disliked ads would be the same regardless of race, education, income or gender, and this hypothesis is supported.

The last hypothesis uses the measure of a commercial's creativity as determined by advertising students in the senior-level research course. Table 3 shows that 70% of the liked commercials were judged creative versus only 46% of the disliked commercials. Hypothesis 9 was supported.

Liked vs. Disliked Ads Findings

Because the study includes the respondents' description of the actual commercial with the brand name and the students' creativity judgment, the list of commercials is presented in Table 4 for further insight. Among general observations are:

1) There is much more agreement about liked commercials than disliked. Four brands account for 44 mentions among the liked; only two brands account for 19 mentions among the disliked (other than "political" commercials). This suggests that only a handful of commercials will be recalled frequently as being particularly liked or disliked.

2) The two lists are nearly equal in terms of different commercials named. The liked list contains 19 single-mentioned brands; the disliked list contains 23. This finding may imply that many different commercials stand out in people's minds as being particularly liked and disliked.

3) Several of the commercials appear on both the liked and disliked lists, which may enforce the view that the public becomes irritated with favored commercials after time.

4) Both lists contain a wide variety of products and services, although most of these are well known national brands.

5) The only "local" commercial on the liked list was for Cubs baseball; several of the disliked commercials were local productions.

6) Commercials deemed creative appear on both lists, although the liked list contains more. Also, creative commercials run the entire gamut of products and services.

7) Some products aren't included on either list, such as cleaning products, medicines, travel, real estate, banks and brokerages. Fast-food and beverage commercials dominate both lists (Bell 1992).

8) Something that is less obvious from the lists is that commercials featuring children and animals appear frequently on the liked list and are virtually absent from the disliked list (Robinson 1997).

Additional observations might be teased from these lists based on a detailed analysis of the content of commercials aired during the late summer and early fall of 1998, but such an analysis is beyond the scope of this study.

Discussion

In trying to tie commercial recall and likability with creativity, the study adds clarity to some of the past research, raises some doubts and offers a direction for future investigations.

Limitations are obvious: 1) the recall measure used is gross rather than refined, and asking for memorable commercials not comparable with usual recall procedures; 2) the sample is from a single-shot, local survey that is relatively small; 3) the analysis is simple rather than complex, although sufficient for the study's intent; and,
4) while the measure of creativity is conservative, it is a new and difficult-to-replicate approach.

Yet with all of these limits, the study certainly shows that people are able to recall, describe and correctly name the product in both a liked and disliked commercial (at a time when no single commercial could be described as dominating people's attention, such as "Where's the beef?").

The finding raises the prospect that people may "carry a set" of several particularly liked and disliked commercials at all times, and that surveys might be a viable method for testing which ads get through the marketing maze. Assessing these "sets" over time might provide direction for creating more penetrating commercials.

In this survey, liked ads were recalled more than the disliked. Future research should retest this finding by alternating the disliked-liked questions to resolve the issue of which type of commercial people remember more.

Regardless of the likability factor, people accurately associate the brand with a memorable commercial. However, they are much more likely to name the brand in their liked commercial, which suggests that an appealing commercial is the better marketing vehicle.

This study's findings also imply that commercial recall is not merely the result of liking or disliking the product. Instead, people remember the commercial (and the product) regardless of their feelings toward the brand. This is an implication that an unknown product or service may gain quick recognition through a particularly memorable commercial. Additionally, a less-known brand might rise in recognition against its competitors as a result of a memorable commercial.

The study adds weight to the view that commercials appeal or irritate across demographic groups. Apparently, the ability to recall memorable ads is about the same regardless of ethnicity, education, income or gender. This supports the notion that people "carry the set" of liked and disliked commercials about equally, with the obvious exception that more frequent television viewers are much more likely to carry the set.

The study contradicts past research that age is related to recall, as recall was measured in this study. The suggestion is that people's set of liked and disliked commercials is a different concept from the ability to recall details or number of commercials. From a methodological standpoint, "memorability," as used in this study, may be a better measure of a commercial's effectiveness than recall.

The outcome that linked creativity to recall should gratify ad agency production staffs. Seventy percent of the liked commercials were deemed creative versus only 46% of the disliked. There is a much better chance of breaking through the clutter with a creative offering, according to this study.

Finally, the caveat of "according to this study" is an important caution because several of its procedures are unique and some findings contradict past research. These findings cannot be considered definitive; they merely present a new direction of research linking commercial recall, likability and creativity.

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Table 1: Sample frequencies with hypotheses implications

	n (418)	Percent or Mean
Named particularly irritating, disliked ad	175	43%
Could describe disliked ad	114	65%
Brand you particularly dislike?	14	12%
Named ad enjoy watching, particularly liked	233	58%
Could describe liked ad	211	91%
Your favorite brand?	61	29%
Television hours watch per day:		
less than 1 hour	52	12%
1 hour	47	11
2 hours	118	28
3 hours	82	20
4 hours	56	14
5 or more hours	63	15
Ethnicity:		
Caucasian	333	80%
African-American	52	13
Other	29	7
Education:		
some high school or high school degree	79	19%
some college or technical school	165	40
college graduate	97	23
post graduate degree	73	18
Income level:		
below $20,000	123	32%
$20,000 to $39,999	103	27
$40,000 to $60,000	96	25
above $60,000	63	16
Gender:		
male	170	41%
female	245	59
Mean age	410	40.3

Table 2: Chi-square and ANOVA data tests

	Named Liked Ad *Yes*	*No*	*p*
Named Disliked Ad			
Yes	67%	33%	<.01
No	51%	49%	

	Mean Hours Per Day Watch TV	
Named Disliked Ad		
Yes	2.92	<.02
No	2.54	
Named Liked Ad		
Yes	2.92	<.01
No	2.46	

	Mean Age	
Named Disliked Ad		
Yes	40.9	n.s.
No	40.0	
Named Liked Ad		
Yes	39.5	n.s.
No	41.6	

	Named Liked Ad	Named Disliked Ad	
Ethnicity:			
Caucasian	57%	42%	
African-American	62%	37%	n.s.
Other	68%	48%	
Education:			
Some High School or H.S. Grad	59%	38%	
Some College or Tech. School	61%	47%	n.s.
College Graduate	54%	40%	
Post Graduate Degree	58%	41%	
Income:			
Below $20,000	58%	43%	
$20,000 to $39,999	48%	44%	n.s.
$40,000 to $60,000	66%	37%	
Above $60,000	64%	46%	
Gender:			
Male	58%	42%	n.s.
Female	59%	43%	

Table 3: Creativity by liked or disliked ad named, described and rated

	Named Liked Commercial, Described It & Ad was Rated (n=170)	Named Disliked Commercial, Described It & Ad was Rated (n=82)	p
Creative	70%	46%	<.001
Not Creative	30	54	

Table 4: Liked and disliked ads, frequency of mention, and creative (*) rating

Liked	Disliked
*Hardee's (13)	*Hardee's (11)
*Taco Bell (11)	Political commercials (10)
*Bud Lite frogs (11)	*Taco Bell (8)
*Miller beer (9)	*Miller beer (4)
Nike (6)	Insurance "eagleman" (2)
any with kids and animals (6)	Loan commercial (2)
Grape juice (3)	beer commercials (2)
*ESPN sports (3)	McDonald's (2)
*Kitty litter (2)	
*Pepsi (2)	
Denny's (2)	
Burger King	AT&T
Bush beer	Arby's
*Coke	*Bud Lite
*Coors Lite	Burger King
Cubs baseball	Cadillac
Disney World	Car dealer (named local)
Edy's ice-cream	Dairy Queen
Folgers	*Drunk — PSA's
*Gap	Fed-Ex
Hallmark cards	*Gatorade
Hostess	Hoover
Kentucky Fried Chicken	Long John Silver's
Levi's	Luckytown lottery
MTV	MCI
Michelob Light	Mr. Food (local television show)
*Snickers	*Nike
*Southwest Airlines	Numetta ice-cream
Volkswagen	Piccola
Women's NBA	Red Roof Inn
	Snack Wheats
	Steak & Shake
	Toyota "Everyday People"
	*Welch's Jelly
baby diapers	automobile
beer	commercials without sound
car commercials	credit card for bad credit
deodorant	diapers
raccoon	local car dealers (general)
	local stores
	talking animals
	testimonials

*judged as creative

The order for both sets of commercials is: 1) arrangement by number of mentions if more than one; 2) alphabetical if brand is named; and 3) alphabetical arrangement by category.

Appendix

Television Commercial Questionnaire (i.d.: /___/___/___/)

PHONE #: /___/___/___/-/___/___/___/___/

Hello, I'm ________________ calling from Southern Illinois University, and I'm doing a television survey for my class. This is **not** a sales call. May I speak with the person who is at home now, who is 18 or older and who had the most recent birthday . . . is that you or someone else?

(IF SAME PERSON:) As I was saying...

(IF DIFFERENT PERSON:) Hello, my name is ________________ and...

I'm an SIUC journalism student doing a class assignment on people's views about television commercials. This survey has been reviewed and approved by the University's Human Subjects Committee. Your residence was selected randomly, and your answers will be completely anonymous. Could you spare about three minutes to help me complete my class assignment? (IF YES:) Here's the first question about commercials on television:

1. Some people watch a lot of television and are very familiar with commercials on TV. About how many hours of television do you watch on an average day, would you say:

a. five or more hours
b. four hours
c. three hours
d. two hours
e. one hour
f. less than an hour

2. Is there a current television commercial that you find really annoying, one that you particularly dislike? yes no

3. IF YES, which one is it (describe)?

(IF MENTIONS A BRAND NAME IN #3, ASK:)

4. You mentioned __(name brand)__. Is that your least favorite brand of __(cereal, car, etc.):__ yes no

5. Is there a current television commercial that you enjoy watching when it comes on, one that you particularly like? yes no

-over-

6. IF YES, which one is it (describe)?

(IF MENTIONS A BRAND NAME IN #6, ASK:)

7. You mentioned __(name brand)__. Is that
your favorite brand of __(cereal, car, etc.):__ yes no

Now, just a few questions to help sort the responses:

8. What year were you born? 19 /____/____/

9. Are you:

___Caucasian ___Hispanic ___Other
___African American ___Asian

10. Stop me when I get to the category that describes your education level:

___some high school or high school graduate
___some college or technical school
___college graduate
___post graduate schooling

11. Stop me when I get to the category that includes your annual family income:

___below $20,000
___$20,000 to $39,999
___$40,000 to $60,000
___above $60,000

That ends the survey. Thanks for helping me with my class assignment. Any questions you may have about this survey's legitimacy can be verified by calling Professor Gerald Stone at 453-3274. Good night. (hang up, RECORD GENDER:)

___male ___female

Sign your name: ______________________________

Circle day: Sun. Mon. Tues. Wed.

END

Adv

The Presence of Nostalgia in Television Commercials

by

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The Presence of Nostalgia in Television Commercials

Abstract

This paper reports the results of a study examining the use of nostalgia in marketing/advertising communications. A content analysis of 2,208 television ads was performed to examine the use of nostalgia in advertising, including the concentration of ads and products advertised and possible segmentation based on age or sex differences. Nostalgia was used in 8.3% of the ads sampled in this study, as compared to 10% found in an earlier study.

The Presence of Nostalgia in Television Commercials

Introduction

Nostalgia, or a fond remembrance of past events, tends to become an emerging theme at the end of a century (Stern 1992) and after "major historic events and abrupt social changes" (Davis 1979, p. 102). Similar to transitions people encounter in their personal lives (e.g., midlife crisis, leaving home, etc.), these events are uncertain, transitional times when people often look to the past for emotional security (Stern 1992). Similar to a child's security blanket, nostalgia helps people face new challenges which life presents.

The existence of nostalgia near the end of a century has been empirically supported in art and literature and it has been suggested that the effect would apply to advertising as well (Davis 1979; Stern 1992). In fact, "nostalgia themes are likely to increase in advertisements of the last twenty years of a century" (Stern 1992, p. 19). The '90s, of course, is not only the end of a century but also the end of a millenium. The millenium has been said to become a popular advertising strategy during the past year or two (Prager 1998) indicating the importance of the study of nostalgia to advertising research. Little research has investigated the millenium's possible impact on using nostalgia in advertising messages.

Davis, a sociologist, started an onslaught of nostalgia research with his book *Yearning for Yesterday* (1979). His ideas spread to various fields including cultural studies, sociology and literary criticism (Davis 1979; Herron 1993; Mason 1996). Communications and consumer behavior researchers only began to investigate the use of nostalgia in advertising in the past 10 years. This research has consisted of theory-based explorations (Havlena and Holak 1991 ; Holbrook 1991; Stern 1992), qualitative research (Havlena and Holak 1996; Holak and Havlena 1992) and empirical studies (Holbrook 1993; Holbrook and Schindler 1996; Unger, McConocha and Faier 1991).

The study of nostalgia as it relates to advertising is, primarily, important for two reasons: (1) it can be an effective message and segmentation strategy (Holbrook 1993; Holbrook and Schindler 1996) and (2) advertising plays a role in the construction of nostalgia as it exists in society (Davis 1979). Recent research (Holbrook 1993; Holbrook and Schindler 1996) has made great strides in better understanding consumer behavior issues of nostalgia. Nostalgia in advertising, in contrast, has received relatively little attention. Therefore, as a baseline measure, the focus of this study was to examine nostalgia's presence in television commercials. This is an area which has received far less attention (Unger et al. 1991) but remains important to the understanding of how nostalgia is used in ads to sell products and what impact it may have on society as a source of media content.

Background Literature

Defining Nostalgia

Not surprisingly, researchers vary in their definitions of nostalgia. The word nostalgia comes from the Greek *nostos*, meaning to return home, and *algia*, meaning a painful condition. Therefore, nostalgia can literally mean "a painful yearning to return home" (Davis 1979). Other researchers have proposed many different ways to define nostalgia.

Stern (1992) refers to the following definition stemming from psychoanalytic literature—"an emotional state in which an individual yearns for an idealized or sanitized version of an earlier time period" (p. 11). Psychologists, including Freud, had considered nostalgia a mental sickness. This sickness was evidenced by insomnia, sadness, loss of strength, diminished senses, loss of appetite, nausea, listlessness and fainting (Havlena and Holak 1991).

Holbrook and Schindler (1991) presented the following definition of nostalgia: "a preference (general liking, positive attitude or favorable affect) toward objects (people, places or things) that were more common (popular, fashionable, or widely circulated) when one was younger (in early adulthood, in adolescence, in childhood, or even before birth)" (p. 330). This definition changed the way nostalgia was viewed and included more nostalgic situations. This was a severe, but needed, departure from psychology's mental sickness view, a more positive view than Davis' (1979) "painful yearning to return home" and it included things other than just home to be the object of nostalgia (e.g., people, objects in existence before one's birth). Indeed, one may feel nostalgic when one looks at old family photos but it doesn't necessarily mean feeling negative about the present or future. Nostalgia may be more of a means to keep the past alive than to avoid the future. Holbrook and Schindler's definition helped to expand the possibilities for research on nostalgia and the societal impact nostalgia is capable of delivering.

In addition there are many different levels or types of nostalgia. Davis (1979) classified nostalgia according to three orders or levels:

1) first order or "simple nostalgia"—positive feeling about a lived past and a negative feeling toward the present or future; essentially, things were better then than now;

2) second order or "reflexive nostalgia"—questioning or analyzing the past rather than sentimentalizing it;

3) third order or "interpreted nostalgia"—analyzing one's nostalgic experience to a much greater extent.

This ordering is similar to the major cognitive categories used in setting educational objectives—knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation (Bloom 1956). At the lowest level of cognitive functioning an individual is aware of a feeling or concept. At the highest level an individual is able to judge a feeling or concept and determine how it fits into a larger picture (e.g., one's life, society, etc.). This helps lend validity to Davis' (1979) conceptualization of the orders or levels of nostalgia.

Another way to look at the dimensions of nostalgia is historical versus personal. This makes the distinction between whether or not the nostalgic past was experienced. Historical nostalgia is a liking for and desire to retreat to a past which was before the person was born and viewed as superior to the present while personal nostalgia focuses on a personally remembered past (Stern 1992). Therefore, historical nostalgia encompasses events which a person did not actually experience in his/her lifetime.

These dimensions help account for nostalgic feelings about bell-bottoms and disco. Few people would admit they think the fashion and dances of the '70s are better than today's but they are still nostalgic about the '70s and its fashions. Someone could have positive feelings about the clothing styles and way of life in the 1920s even though s/he had not directly experienced this time period. This is also seen in people's desire to collect antiques and rare objects. Often these are handed down through generations but people will commonly collect objects from before their lifetime (e.g., coins, books, clothing, furniture, tools). This would also be considered historical nostalgia. If a person collects old coins, does it mean that he/she prefers them to present day currency? Is it simply the enjoyment of collecting coins and the challenge of finding rare coins? Or is it an attempt to keep the past alive?

It is no easier to define nostalgia in a variety of situations than it is to answer those questions. Holbrook and Schindler's (1991) definition is broad enough to cover a variety of situations when consumers encounter nostalgia (e.g., entertainment, clothing, advertising, music, etc.). Stern's (1992) definition is really encompassed in Holbrook and Schindler's because of the "even before birth" statement. Finally, Davis' (1979) definition is examining different and much deeper issues concerning what people think about nostalgia. It gets at nostalgia's impact on society. These important questions are no doubt worthy of in-depth examination. For the purpose of this study the Holbrook and Schindler's (1991) definition of nostalgia is adopted.

Nostalgia and Products

The use of nostalgia in ads has been found to vary by product category. For example, food, beverages, medicines and automotive had a higher incidence of nostalgia than children's products, cleaning products and cosmetics (Unger et al. 1991). It seems that certain products use a nostalgic appeal because the potential purchasers may be older (e.g., medicines) while others use it to convey a certain feeling of old-fashioned goodness (e.g., food). In contrast, cleaning products and cosmetics may want to convey an up-to-date/latest development image (Unger et al. 1991). Along this same line, the increasingly popular high-tech products (e.g., computers, cell phones, Web-related products/services) may also tend not to use nostalgia because it is counter to the orientation of "high-tech."

Products were a common theme in qualitative nostalgic research involving collages of things consumers associated with nostalgia. Most often these products were from childhood (Havlena and Holak 1996) which supports the theory that this is when nostalgic associations are formed (Furno-Lamude 1994; Holbrook and Schindler 1996). For example, the following shows how two respondents shared a nostalgic association about Jell-O: "Janet [another subject] and I bonded on that one, 'cause my mom always used to make Jell-O molds...always, every big holiday, Thanksgiving...get out that mold, do the layers...you know how you make that design with Jell-O—but no more" (Havlena and Holak 1996).

Nostalgia and Advertising

To date nostalgia has been researched as it relates to marketing communication in two ways—demographic/psychographic characteristics of consumers and its presence in advertisements. The demographic/psychographic consumer research has received more attention in the literature. This is probably due to the need to segment target markets and understand if certain groups of consumers are more receptive to nostalgic appeals. This research has resulted in two key ideas—there is a relationship between age and nostalgia and certain individuals may have higher propensities to nostalgia (Holak and Havlena 1992; Holbrook 1996; Holbrook and Schindler 1996).

First, it has been suggested that the objects (e.g., movies, celebrities, books) of people's nostalgia are from their own adolescence and early adulthood (Furno-Lamude 1994; Havlena and Holak 1991; Holak and Havlena 1992; Holbrook and Schindler 1991; Holbrook and Schindler 1996). Although it has been hypothesized, there has not been any empirical support for differences in the amount of nostalgia felt by different ages (i.e., baby-boomers, elderly). However, some people are said to have a higher tendency towards nostalgia (favorability towards orientations of the past) than others (Holbrook 1996; Holbrook and Schindler 1996). Using a 20-item nostalgia index, Holbrook and Schindler (1996) found that there were differences in people's attitudes towards the past or likelihood to become nostalgic. They further theorized that this individual characteristic may cohere with other psychographic variables such as sentimentality or a desire to collect old things.

Comparatively, the presence of nostalgia in advertisements has received much less research attention. Unger, et al. (1991) found nostalgia in 10% of a sample of television ads from 1987. Advertising often uses nostalgic elements to gain attention and improve comprehension. These elements may include references to past family experiences, the "olden days," old brands, or use of period-orientated symbolism or music (Unger et al. 1991). Using Unger et al.'s (1991) data as a benchmark, Stern's (1992) proposition that nostalgic appeals increase in the last 20 years of a century can be tested. In addition, this area requires additional research attention to help determine if a relationship exists between nostalgia and different demographic segments and further explore the impact nostalgic advertising may have on society as well as consumers.

Marketing communications has a long history of research studying emotional appeals (Aaker, Stayman and Hagerty 1986; Boster and Mongeau 1984; Edell and Burke 1987; Weinberger and Gulas 1992). However, these studies and others have predominately focused on fear, humor and warmth appeals. Nostalgia may also be another type of emotional appeal used in advertising. And yet, little is known about how often it is used, why or its effects. A recent study by Holak and Havlena (1998) supports the conceptualization of nostalgia as another type of effective marketing communication tool.

Based on the above literature review, the following research questions helped to guide this study:

1) Compared to Unger et al.'s study almost 10 years ago, has the use of nostalgia in advertising changed, specifically in concentration of ads and products advertised?

and

2) Can observations be made regarding the possible segmentation strategy based on age or sex differences for nostalgic ads?

Method

A content analysis study was carried out to answer the research questions. The sample consisted of a constructive week of television commercials which appeared on the major networks (i.e., ABC, CBS, NBC) and Fox during the last week of October 1997. Duplicate advertisements were included in the sample to reflect the desirable frequency of certain elements used in the advertisements during this period. However, several types of advertisements such as station identification, public service announcements and promotions for local events (e.g., Tour of Homes) were excluded from the sample.

Procedure

A code sheet (see Appendix A) was developed to record elements of nostalgia. The use of nostalgia was coded according to the references of past family experiences, the "olden days," old brands; or use of period-orientated symbolism, period-orientated music or patriotism (Unger et al. 1991). Unger et al.'s categories and definitions were used in this study to facilitate comparisons of the results (detailed definitions used to train the coders are included in Appendix A).

In addition to the nostalgia variable, the ads were coded according to network (ABC, CBS, NBC or FOX), daypart (morning 5:30-8:00 a.m., a.m.-daytime 9:00 a.m.-noon, p.m.-daytime noon-3:00 p.m., early fringe 3:00-7:00 p.m., primetime 7:00-10:00 p.m. and late fringe 10:00 p.m.-1:00 a.m.), ad length (10, 15, 30, 60 second or other), program type (situation comedy, drama, soap opera, talk show, news/magazine show, national/local news or other), program name (recorded as open-ended), product category (recorded from a list of 40 categories, included in Appendix A), product brand name (recorded as open-ended) and local/national/co-op advertisement. This information was important to indicate trends and relationships with the issues of products, segmentation and nostalgia.

Reliability

Two trained coders (undergraduate communication majors at a southwestern state university) independently coded the ads. Intercoder reliability was assessed by having a 50% overlap in the ads coded. In other words, half of the ads were coded by both coders and the results were compared to determine the intercoder reliability. The overall intercoder reliability was very high at 96%. Individual item intercoder reliabilities ranged from 84% (product category) to 100% (program type, station, etc.). Disagreements were resolved by a judge in consultation with the two coders.

Results and Discussion

Sample

The sample consisted of 2,208 advertisements. The advertisements were distributed across the networks as follows: ABC (33%), CBS (17%), NBC (32%) and Fox (18%). The distribution of the ads within dayparts was as follows: morning 5:30-8:00 a.m. (10%), a.m.-daytime 9:00 a.m.-noon (17%), p.m.-daytime noon-3:00 p.m. (25%), early fringe 3:00-7:00 p.m. (22%), primetime 7:00-10:00 p.m. (13%) and late fringe 10:00 p.m.-1:00 a.m. (14%). This is similar to the distribution of television ads found in media studies done by the American Association of Advertising Agencies and the Network Television Association. Daytime has the greatest number of ads followed by primetime (Hayes 1998; Mandese 1992; Schmuckler 1991). The television programming included: national/local news (23%), soap operas (23%), talk shows (21%), "others" (e.g., movies) (20%), situation comedies (7%), news/magazine shows (3%) and dramas (3%). Finally, a majority of the ads were 30 second spots (76%), followed by 15 second spots (20%), 10 second spots (3%), 60 second spots (1%) and "others" (e.g., 45 seconds) (1%).

Overall Use of Nostalgia

Nostalgia was used in 8.3% of the ads sampled in this study. Therefore, the results of the content analysis do not indicate an increase in nostalgic ads since the finding of 10% in Unger et al.'s study which used a sample of 1987 television advertisements and included duplicates in their findings. Furthermore, the results of this study do not seem to support Stern's (1992) idea that nostalgia increases in the last 20 years of a century. As mentioned earlier, it is difficult to assess this increase without a benchmark prior to the 20-year mark. The samples for these two studies were 10 years apart (1987 and 1997). It is possible that this is not a sufficient time span to see a difference in the level of nostalgia being used or that the results for one or both of the studies is not representative of the advertising being used. It is also possible that the results disconfirm Stern's proposition.

The specific types of nostalgia used were as follows: period-orientated symbolism (4.1%), period-orientated music (2.2%), references to "olden days" (1.4%), references to past family experiences (0.9%), references to old brands (0.5%) and patriotism (0.1%). The high degree of nostalgic ad which used period-orientated symbolism or music seems to indicate that the cultural aspects of nostalgia are deemed more important or prevalent in society. Also, of the ads which contained nostalgia, 11.5% of them contained more than one type of nostalgia. Although a fairly low percentage, it does indicate that more than one appeal can be used in a single advertisement. Another possible explanation for the somewhat lower percentage of nostalgia ads could be that the increase is in using more than one type of nostalgia in one ad, thus reflecting a more focused use as opposed to an overall increase.

Nostalgia and Products

Table 1 shows the presence of nostalgia by product categories. The product categories which had the highest percent using nostalgic appeals were: real estate (50%), stereo/telephones/TV (45%), appliances/computers (35%), sports/leisure (29%), banking/investments (21%), non-alcoholic beverages (e.g., coffee, soft drinks, juices) (19%), dairy/desserts/bread products (18%) and memberships/public activities (e.g., dating services, attorneys) (17%). The product categories that had the lowest percent using nostalgic appeals were: children's products (0%), beer/wine beverages (0%), women's beauty aids/personal products (0%) and cereals/rice/past/pizza/ fruits/vegetables (2%). These results are interesting because there are several high-tech products (e.g., computers, electronics) which used nostalgic appeals to a high degree. This could indicate that Unger et al.'s (1991) findings that some products (cleaning products or cosmetics) which want to provide an up-to-date/latest development image tend not to use nostalgic appeals does not extend to high-tech products. It is also apparent that nostalgia is not a phenomenon limited to only a few product categories. Only nine product categories had no ads which used a nostalgic appeal.

There were also some interesting findings for the specific type of nostalgic appeal used for different brands. Fifty-five percent of the ads which referenced old brands were for automobiles. This may be an attempt to capitalize on established brand equity. The majority (60%) of the stereo/telephone/TV ads used period-orientated symbolism. This seems counter-intuitive because this appeal uses a lot of imagery and symbols, whereas, electronics ads often focus on features and benefits. A high percentage of home furnishings/home improvement ads (86%) used period-orientated music which may indicate the preference of the target audience for older/classic music. These results may be slightly biased because these ads included several for a music-orientated movie (i.e., Boogie Nights) which would naturally use this type of appeal.

Table 2 further details the percentage of ads from each product category which used a particular appeal. For example, 67% of "chewing gum, candy, cookies and snacks" nostalgic ads, 71% of "sports, leisure" nostalgic ads and 70% of "banking, investments" nostalgic ads used period-orientated symbolism. Each of these categories seems to have its own particular reason for using period-orientated symbolism. For example, sports and leisure ads may benefit from invoking positive memories of past great athletes while banking and investment ads remind consumers how banking was done in the '70s.

Nostalgia and Possible Audience Segmentation

An investigation of what daypart and what type of program the nostalgic ads are placed may give an indication of what type of audience is believed to be best suited to this appeal. For example, people will watch more TV during the day versus the evening depending on their lifestyle (e.g., work at home during the day or work outside of the home during the day). Likewise, different types of people watch different programs (e.g., adults watch the news, people looking for humor watch situation comedies or talk shows, women tend to watch more soap operas than men, etc.).

Table 3 shows the presence of the different types of nostalgia by daypart. It is important to note that the primetime and late fringe dayparts have a heavier concentration of nostalgic ads overall (12.0% and 23.1%, respectively). This is logical because nostalgia has been theorized to be formed during adolescence and early adulthood and assuming that young adults and adults are the largest audience watching at this time because the kids are asleep. Advertisers appear to be using more nostalgia to reach this older audience. The type of nostalgia being used also supports this conclusion. Period-orientated symbolism is used most often during primetime (7.6%) and late fringe (8.5%). Followed by a high percentage of period-orientated music during late fringe (6.2%). These two types of nostalgia may be tapping into the "personal nostalgia" of these individuals who experienced the symbolism and music of the past.

Examining types of nostalgia by program type supports and expands on these findings (see Table 4). Programs that tend to be viewed by adults have a higher incidence of nostalgia ads whether or not they are only on at night, such as news/magazine show (22.4%), situation comedy (16.6%), talk show (10.2%), other (i.e., movies) (12.5%). Again, ads in these shows tend to use period-orientated symbolism and music with one notable exception. Seven percent of ads in news/magazine shows used "references to past family experiences" which was the second most used type of nostalgia for that type of program. This could be due to the family-orientated nature of the content, that families (i.e., parents, grown siblings) tend to watch these shows together which presents an opportunity to reminisce. Most of the types of nostalgia can be collective instead of solitary experiences, however; nostalgia about family experiences is most often a shared event.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

The major limitation of this study is the type of analyses that can be performed on content analysis data. Descriptive statistics are a good indication of advertising elements from the sample but it is difficult to infer what this indicates about the audience or society as a whole. It is also difficult to assess the reason why a certain type of message appeal is used or who the target audience was for the ad. It could be assumed that the advertiser used the appeal because it is the most affective but this is difficult to prove. In addition, these results are limited to television advertising and may not be generalizable to other media.

Another limitation involves the product categories used to code the ads. While most of the categories seemed logical, some limited the conclusions that could be drawn because of the way products were categorized. For example, appliances and computers were coded as one category but are admittedly quite different. Given the degree that the world has become one of high technology and information, computers may be better considered a category by itself for future studies.

Future research should investigate the role that nostalgia advertising plays in consumer's lives and whether or not it helps establish a collective identity and relieve stress in times of great transitions. This research could consist of focus groups or one-on-one interviews which would explore consumer's thoughts and feelings about nostalgia, specifically nostalgic advertising. Research should also examine the use of nostalgic advertising in different media (e.g., print, radio). The coding scheme for nostalgia ads used in this study seems appropriate overall. However, future studies may consider eliminating "patriotism" due to its low incidence in this study (0.1%) and in Unger et al.'s study (3%). Patriotism is an appeal that may only be used during times of war or for economic reasons (i.e., "Buy American").

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Table 1
Presence of Nostalgia by Product Category

Product Category	**Presence of Nostalgia** (n=2,208)
Real Estate	50%
Stereo, Telephones, TV	45%
Appliances, Computers	33%
Sports, Leisure	29%
Banking, Investments	21%
Coffee, Tea, Cocoa, Milk, Soft Drinks, Juices, Bottled Water	19%
Dairy Products, Desserts, Baking/Bread Products	18%
Memberships, Public Activities	17%
Home Furnishings, Home Improvements	12%
Automobiles, Cycles, Trucks, Vans	10%
Batteries	10%
Restaurants, Stores, Grocery Shopping	9%
Soap, Laundry, Paper Products, Kitchen Wraps	8%
Automotive Products, Services	7%
Chewing Gum, Candy, Cookies, Snacks	7%
Men's, Women's Apparel	7%
Telephone Company	7%
Insurance, Credit Cards	7%
Household Cleaners, Room Deodorizers, Pest Control, Pet Foods	7%
Other	6%
Soups, Meat, Fish, Poultry, Condiments, Dressings	5%
Hair Care Products, Shaving Products	4%
Games, Toys	4%
Cereals, Spreads, Rice, Pasta, Pizza, Mexican Foods, Fruits, Vegetables	2%
Oral Hygiene Products, Skin Care, Deodorants	2%
Health Care Products, Remedies	2%
Travel	0%
Books, Records, Tapes, Compact Discs	0%
Jewelry, Watches, Luggage	0%
Children's, Babies' Apparel & Specialty Products	0%
Photography	0%
Malt Beverages, Wine	0%
Women's Beauty Aids, Cosmetics, Personal Products	0%
Car Rental	0%
Cable TV Channel	0%
Sewing, Garden Care	*
Direct Mail, Other In-Home Shopping, Florists, Telegrams, Greeting Cards	*
Pens, Pencils, Stationery	*
Tobacco Products	*
Distilled Spirits, Mixed Drinks	*

* No ads fell under this category.

Table 2
Types of Nostalgia by Product Category

	References to past family experiences	References to "olden days"	Period-orientated symbolism	Period-orientated music	References to old brands	Patriotism
Automobiles, Cycles, Trucks, Vans (n=31)	13%	26%	**55%**	0%	16%	3%
Automotive Products, Services (n=2)	0%	0%	**100%**	50%	0%	0%
Banking, Investments (n=10)	10%	30%	**70%**	0%	0%	0%
Memberships, Public Activities (n=5)	0%	0%	20%	**60%**	0%	20%
Insurance, Credit Cards (n=3)	33%	0%	0%	**67%**	0%	0%
Stereo, Telephones, TV (n=5)	40%	0%	**60%**	0%	0%	0%
Appliances, Computers (n=8)	0%	0%	**50%**	38%	13%	0%
Home Furnishings, Home Improvements (n=7)	0%	0%	14%	**86%**	0%	0%
Sports, Leisure (n=14)	0%	0%	**71%**	43%	7%	0%
Restaurants, Stores, Grocery Shopping (n=22)	5%	18%	**59%**	27%	0%	0%
Men's, Women's Apparel (n=1)	0%	0%	**100%**	0%	0%	0%
Coffee, Tea, Cocoa, Milk, Soft Drinks, Juices, Bottled Water (n=8)	13%	0%	**63%**	25%	0%	0%
Dairy Products, Desserts, Baking/Bread Products (n=13)	23%	**46%**	23%	8%	8%	0%
Cereals, Spreads, Rice, Pasta, Pizza, Mexican Foods, Fruits, Vegetables (n=2)	0%	0%	**100%**	0%	0%	0%
Soups, Meat, Fish, Poultry, Condiments, Dressings (n=2)	0%	0%	**100%**	0%	0%	0%
Chewing Gum, Candy, Cookies, Snacks (n=6)	0%	17%	**67%**	17%	17%	0%
Soap, Laundry, Paper Products, Kitchen Wraps (n=7)	14%	0%	14%	**71%**	0%	0%
Household Cleaners, Room Deodorizers, Pest Control, Pet Foods (n=3)	**33%**	**33%**	**33%**	0%	0%	0%
Health Care Products, Remedies (n=4)	25%	50%	0%	25%	0%	0%
Oral Hygiene Products, Skin Care, Deodorants (n=2)	0%	0%	0%	**50%**	**50%**	0%
Hair Care Products, Shaving Products (n=2)	0%	0%	0%	**100%**	0%	0%
Games, Toys (n=2)	0%	**50%**	**50%**	0%	0%	0%
Batteries (n=1)	0%	0%	**100%**	0%	0%	0%
Real Estate (n=3)	0%	0%	0%	**100%**	0%	0%
Telephone Company (n=2)	**50%**	0%	**50%**	0%	0%	0%
Other (n=17)	12%	35%	**59%**	35%	0%	6%

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Table 3
Types of Nostalgia by Daypart

	References to "olden days"	Period-orientated symbolism	Period-orientated music	References to old brands	Patriotism	Total
Morning (5:30-8am)	0.0%	0.9%	0.0%	0.5%	0.5%	2.4%
AM-Daytime (9am-noon)	1.6%	5.2%	4.2%	0.3%	0.3%	12.0%
PM-Daytime (noon-3pm)	0.9%	2.2%	1.3%	0.0%	0.0%	4.9%
Early Fringe (3-7pm)	2.1%	1.9%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	4.4%
Primetime (7-10pm)	0.7%	7.6%	2.2%	0.7%	0.4%	12.0%
Late Fringe (10pm-1am)	2.9%	8.5%	6.2%	2.0%	0.0%	23.1%

Table 4
Types of Nostalgia by Program Type

	References to past family experiences	References to "olden days"	Period-orientated symbolism	Period-orientated music	References to old brands	Patriotism	Total
situation comedy	0.6%	1.3%	8.3%	3.8%	2.5%	0.0%	16.6%
drama	0.0%	0.0%	6.5%	1.6%	0.0%	0.0%	8.1%
soap opera	0.4%	0.8%	1.4%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	3.0%
talk show	0.6%	0.6%	4.3%	4.3%	0.2%	0.2%	10.2%
news/ magazine show	6.6%	2.6%	7.9%	5.3%	0.0%	0.0%	22.4%
national/ local news	1.0%	2.5%	3.1%	1.0%	0.2%	0.2%	8.0%
other	1.4%	1.9%	5.6%	2.5%	0.9%	0.2%	12.5%

Appendix A
Coder Training

Codesheet

1. **Date:** ________________

2. **Network:** 1. ABC 2. CBS 3. NBC 4. FOX

3. **Daypart:**
   1. Morning (5:30-8 am)
   2. AM-Daytime (9 am-noon)
   3. PM-Daytime (noon-3pm)
   4. Early Fringe (3-7 pm)
   5. Primetime (7-10 pm)
   6. Late Fringe (10 pm-1 am)

4. **Ad Length:** 1. 10 seconds 2. 15 seconds 3. 30 seconds 4. 60 seconds 5. Other ________

5. **Program Type:**
   1. Situation Comedy
   2. Drama
   3. Soap Opera
   4. Talk Show
   5. News/Magazine Show
   6. National/Local News
   7. Other: ______________

6. **Program Name:** ____

7. **Product Category:** (attached, please write in code) ________

8. **Product Brand Name:** ____________________

9. **Local or national advertisement:**
   1. Local 2. National 3. Co-op

10. **Nostalgia used in ad:** (Circle all that apply)
    1. References to past family experiences
    2. References to "olden days"
    3. Period-orientated symbolism
    4. Period-orientated music
    5. References to old brands
    6. Patriotism
    7. None

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Codesheet Definitions

Nostalgia (#10 on codesheet)

1. References to past family experiences—
   - Fond memories of growing up
   - fond memories of family member interaction
   - fond memories of friends
2. References to "olden days"
   - old-fashioned quality
   - old-fashioned values
   - good old days
   - use of older people as spokespersons in nostalgic way
   - use of older celebrities in nostalgic way
3. Period-orientated symbolism
   - imagery from '30s, '40s, '50s, '60s, '70s, '80s
   - imagery from other periods
   - references to earlier symbols or icons (art, religion, education, fashion)
4. Period-orientated music
   - use of golden oldies
   - popular music from'50s, '60s, '70s, '80s
5. References to old brands
   - use of old brand names
   - use of old brand characters/spokespersons
   - revival of old brand names
   - use of actual old ads or clips
6. Patriotism
   - buy American
   - celebration of American heritage

<u>Product Categories</u>

1. Automobiles, Cycles, Trucks, Vans
2. Automotive Products, Services
3. Travel
4. Banking, Investments
5. Memberships, Public Activities
6. Insurance, Credit Cards
7. Books, Records, Tapes, Compact Discs
8. Stereo, Telephones, TV
9. Appliances, Computers
10. Sewing, Garden Care
11. Home Furnishings, Home Improvements
12. Sports, Leisure
13. Restaurants, Stores, Grocery Shopping
14. Direct Mail, Other In-Home Shopping, Florists, Telegrams, Greeting Cards
15. Jewelry, Watches, Luggage
16. Pens, Pencils, Stationery
17. Men's, Women's Apparel
18. Children's, Babies' Apparel & Specialty Products
19. Tobacco Products
20. Photography
21. Distilled Spirits, Mixed Drinks
22. Malt Beverages, Wine
23. Coffee, Tea, Cocoa, Milk, Soft Drinks, Juices, Bottled Water
24. Dairy Products, Desserts, Baking/Bread Products
25. Cereals, Spreads, Rice, Pasta, Pizza, Mexican Foods, Fruits, Vegetables
26. Soups, Meat, Fish, Poultry, Condiments, Dressings
27. Chewing Gum, Candy, Cookies, Snacks
28. Soap, Laundry, Paper Products, Kitchen Wraps
29. Household Cleaners, Room Deodorizers, Pest Control, Pet Foods
30. Health Care Products, Remedies
31. Oral Hygiene Products, Skin Care, Deodorants
32. Hair Care Products, Shaving Products
33. Women's Beauty Aids, Cosmetics, Personal Products
34. Games, Toys
35. Batteries
36. Real Estate
37. Telephone Company
38. Car Rental
39. Cable TV Channel
40. Other

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